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ABSTRACT

A three-year course of study in Christian ethics for grades 10, 11, and 12 is outlined. The course is intended to help students articulate, reflect upon, and understand what they believe and practice. The guide's introduction discusses the need for Christian development and the role that parents, school, and parish should play in that development. Course objectives are described and the psychological characteristics of the adolescent are discussed. The organization of the course and evaluation techniques are described. The bulk of the guide outlines the major themes of the course: (1) God and man (searching for God, world religions, faith and atheism, and life after death); (2) Christ in scripture (the Gospels, the parables, the beatitudes, the Old Testament, and the Bible); (3) the contemporary Christian community (the church, Christian worship and sacraments, prayer, and everyday ecumenism); and (4) the Christian (Christian morality and conscience, moral problems today, marriage, and social justice). For each theme the guide outlines general and specific objectives, teaching methods, learning activities, and evaluation methods. (RM)

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Saskatchewan
Education

A Curriculum Guide for Division IV

Christian Ethics

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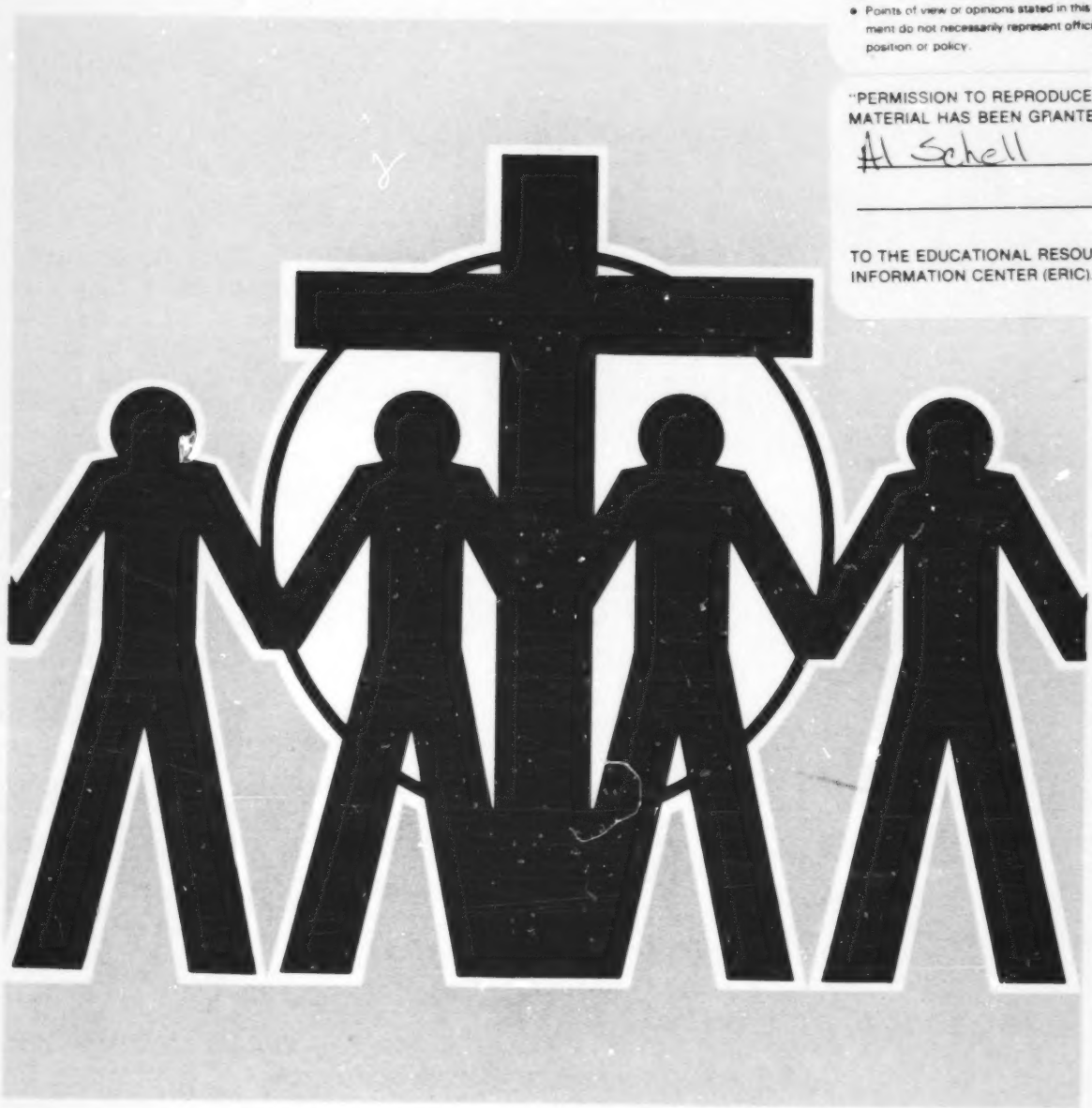

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May, 1984

A Curriculum Guide For Division IV
Christian Ethics

Saskatchewan Department of Education
May 1984

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Foreword

This edition of the Christian Ethics course was developed by a Department of Education Curriculum Committee, under the chairmanship of Mr. Ken McDonough, as a revision of the course authorized January 1975 by the Minister of Education, as a Division IV credit course. Its use as a Division IV credit course is permissible, with school board approval, in any school.

The course is designed as a three-year Division IV program with an allocation of approximately 120 minutes a week in a 40 week school year. There are four major or "core" themes, each treated in four or five sub-themes.

The course is not organized as separate courses for each of Grades 10, 11 and 12, but it is designed to provide a three-year program through the selection of themes for study appropriate to each grade level. One "core" theme is to be studied each year. Choice of core themes and sub-themes make it possible to vary the content and emphasis for the three grades.

Student standings for Christian Ethics are to be reported as one credit for each grade level at which the course is taken.

Acknowledgments

The Department of Education wishes to acknowledge the dedicated efforts of the following members of the Christian Ethics Committee:

Rev. Nicolas Castelyns
Mr. Gerry Cooke
Mr. Adrian Fuchs
Sister Teresita Kambeitz
Mr. Ken McDonough (chairperson)
Sister Rose Miller
Rev. Pius Sieben

and the contributions of the following to the program:

Miss Agathe Champagne
Rev. Wendy Rolheiser
Mrs. Shirley Dlouhy (secretary)

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Introduction To Christian Ethics

The Need For Christian Development

Christian education is based on, centered around, and aimed toward the human development and Christian actualization of the learner as a person. It assists the learner to become fully human.

A school exists in partnership with the home and parish community to encourage the student to grow, to attain personal maturity in life, to develop the whole person with an understanding of one's God-given existence.

The student who is capable of intellectual, artistic, physical and social growth is also capable of much more. Basic questions can be asked about life: Why am I here? Who am I? What does the future hold? These questions may be posed in different ways, or they may not even be articulated, but they remain questions. Somehow, each person at one time or another, senses that there is more to life than meets the eye. Each one needs to touch the really real religious awareness. It is a basic human need, which turns the human person into a searcher and questioner.

Christian growth is an opening to life, to reality, to others, through a personal relationship with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It is a gradual process which follows its own laws of development. It may mature in different persons in a variety of ways and at different points in their lives. While we can evaluate an increase in certain types of religious knowledge, we can never manipulate or measure the depth of faith, or predict the manner and direction of its growth. Ultimately, we can recognize that each individual is responsible for personal selfhood.

Christian growth should serve as a uniting and integrating force. Life will then be more than a puzzle broken into bits and pieces. There will be an interior source of life, a sense of identity in the present and an inner sureness in the face of an uncertain future. No longer will the student be guided merely by external influences, but by internal motivation.

The Course

The course is but a partial answer to Christian education. It is one factor among many. It exists in a context much larger than itself. A course in the school will be more successful or effective if reinforced by the home, a Christian school atmosphere and parish community. Growth in faith is fostered in a specifically Christ-oriented environment.

Parents

In its Declaration on Christian Education, Vatican II underlined a verity that should have gone without saying. "Parents," says the document, "are the first and foremost educators of their children." Religious education begins in the cradle. Christianity is basically a way of life and much of the direction of that life is established by age five or six. The awakening of conscience, growth of concern for others, the sense of right and wrong, habits of prayer, an awareness of God in everyday living — all of these important elements of religious education or their lack, are absorbed right in the home during the early formative years. The best religious education that parents can provide for their children consists in being real Christian parents. Schools or programs never did replace parents. It wasn't true in the past; it is not true now.

The School

Every administrator and staff member shares equally in the responsibility for the growth of the student in Catholic faith and practice. A Christian school community is the best vehicle for religious education. The ethics teacher may teach theology or doctrine better in a specific class. But it is the faculty that teaches "living Christian values" whether or not it is conscious of doing so. The faculty teaches religion by the style of interaction or lack of it with each other and with the student. A fair system of disipline teaches the religious lessons of justice and love; respect for each other indirectly teaches brotherhood; students seeing teachers express their faith at religious worship and at work or play may find value for it in their own lives.

The school should exemplify that the presence of Christ is found in the Eucharist, in Scripture and in the everyday actions of the community. The faculty and student body become a living social laboratory in Christian living. When students hear teachers talk a great deal about the excellence of Christianity, they wish to experience this in their everyday actions. The gap between theory and practice then disappears.

Adult witnessing, in all its variety, is needed at least as much as updated textbooks for leading students to an adult Christianity. Students deserve to know where adults stand on the issues of today; they need to see that morality makes a difference in real life. Not to speak on vital concerns is to speak. Silence has its own way of communicating.

Schools, however, are not and cannot be "islands of Christianity." They are not hotbeds or structures which close in on themselves. They must be open to the pluralistic society with which their students are daily in contact. Schools will always experience a state of tension for they are educating students to live in a milieu opposed to the one they know.

In the final analysis, the learning situation, while respecting the student's freedom in the school, invites them to accept the Christian values and to interiorize them.

The Parish

There is a growing realization that one's personal faith needs the support of a believing community. It is a fact that catechizing students is more than ever dependent upon the faith of adults.

In a vital community of believers there is a sense of aliveness. There is a strong compelling purpose, a dedication to a common ideal that attracts and edifies. People want to belong, to be where the action is.

The believing community establishes a cohesive group in relation to a world view, forms a conscience according to a value system, and provides a sense of belonging within a social group. Christians need a 'support structure' to aid their growing and groping faith. Since a person's values, beliefs and attitudes are developed to a high degree by an environment of stable patterns of interaction with other persons, a student needs a Christian environment in order to live and communicate in a vital way.

Only in and through an adult believing community, can conflict between the school and home be avoided. Until and unless both encompass the same goals, values, models and basic assumptions, implicit in everything that a given group of human beings do, confusion will remain. Unless adults become aware of the new approaches in the schools, they will become barriers instead of bridges in building up the faith of the student.

Finally, worship has always been an effective way of teaching Christianity. Hence the parish must provide meaningful liturgies as people need ritual to express themselves.

The Christian Ethics Course

No course is intended to provide a total, comprehensive understanding of the Christian message. It is one slice of the whole pie. Once religious realities have been experienced in the home and school environment, acknowledged and worshipped in the parish liturgy, the experience can be explained and reflected upon in specific religion courses.

To expect a course in Christian Ethics to shoulder the total burden of the religious education of a student is to give it a task it is incapable of accomplishing. The proper role of a course is to help students to articulate, to reflect upon and to understand what they believe and practise.

Objectives

1. Through exploration of the course themes, students will see the relationship between their present values, concerns and yearnings and the Gospel.
2. To assist students to interpret their experiences, dreams, failures, loves and concerns in the light of Christ's life, death and resurrection.
3. In a pluralistic society the Gospel gives rise to a particular Christian life orientation and a particular value system. The Christian Ethics course will:
   (a) make the students aware of the Christian option;
   (b) invite them to accept the Christian option;
   (c) encourage them in Christian living.
4. To place special emphasis on religious traditions.
5. To foster an understanding of, and respect for all religions.
6. To stress the importance of the drive toward unity among the various Christian traditions.
7. To stress the invitation of the Gospel to a deep prayer life.
8. To assist the student to develop a concern for others.
9. To have the student become aware of the Christian responsibility to improve the quality of life in the social order.

Experience-Learning

Revelation is not something that happened only in the ancient past and needs only to be studied and believed. On the contrary, revelation is also a "here" and "now" reality; it is a dynamic, on-going dialogue, between God and persons, in which each one participates. God's self-revealing action has occurred and continues to take place in the events of human lives today.

Religion is life. It is about ordinary persons, everyday events and experiences, because this is where God acts. These are the materials which Christ used to show us how to live the Christian life. He integrated people and events with His message of love. He was never "away out there" but operated within the pulse of the lives of the people to whom He spoke, interpreting their laws, their values and their traditions. (See Luke 22, 33-34; Matthew 4, 23-24; Mark 2, 15-17; Luke 7, 36-50; John 4, 1-12; Mark 7, 1-13;

Matthew 6, 5-6; John 2, 13-22.) Christ used the stuff of His world, the seed and the sower, fish and the fishermen and the tools of the trade, to convey His message.

> "If we can remember that behind the face of every person, we can find the face of Christ, and that in the face of Christ we can recognize the face of the Heavenly Father, then our humanness becomes Christianity."
>
> — Pope Paul

If God reveals and gives Himself through the things, events and persons in everyday life, then Christian education must be experienced learning. God speaks in and through the experiences of the past and the present and the personal experience of each one of us. A course should be attentive to the students' own personal experiences. It also structures experiences for the students. If religion is presented as something "apart from" and "beyond" their lives, they will not understand the relevance of the Christian message to their lives.

How do we get into their lives? By using the inductive-multi-media approach. This approach meets the students in the sights, documentaries, films, posters, news-clippings, ads, etc. These are used to create meaningful discovery situations where basic questions can be raised within a Christian frame of reference.

The multi-media experience is part of the everyday life of young people. This speaks to them much more realistically at their age than the logically presented printed matter familiar to the adult generation. The printed word is one way of communicating. Another is the image world. Both are important.

Although the student's own life experience is the starting point and centre of religious thinking, it must be seen within a wider context. Students do not adequately understand their own life-history until they come to see it within the history of God's relation with the Jewish People (Old Testament), the life of Jesus (New Testament), the members of the Church and the entire human community.

Like the Jews of the Old Testament, students cannot commit themselves totally from the beginning. They must experience, assimilate and ponder situations. Commitment ought to be a fully human and moral decision. As such, it must always be the result of a personally experienced history.

A reflection upon the student's life experiences must always become a reflection upon the person of Jesus Christ, who realized personal existence to the full.

The Role Of The Teacher

Teachers must be aware of their role in the Christian community as co-sharers in the mission of Christ.

In the Christian community St. Paul places the teacher third in the order of importance. "God has appointed in the Church, first Apostles, second Prophets, third Teachers, then Workers of Miracles, then Healers, Helpers, Administrators ..." (Cor. 12:37)

The Christian Ethics teacher is always conscious of this exalted position in the Christian community and of the role to be played. Teaching religion is a sacred action done in, with and through the power of Christ. Teachers must often remind themselves that they are co-sharers in the mission of Christ. They do not presume to talk to students about God until they have first talked to God about their students.

To awaken the sense of search for meaning is the essence of the theory of catechesis. By encouraging the inquisitive nature of youth, and by being open to themselves and their students, teachers become pilgrims with their students in a search for truth.

Such a concept is in line with Pope John XXIII's plea for the church to discern the signs of the times, and to recognize that the Church is "journeying in a foreign land away from her Lord." Both teacher and student must question and search for where they are, where they are going, rather than looking at where they have been and where they should rest. We must accompany our young people on their quest for meaning, and be truly open to the varied ways in which different ages and religions have answered the questions of faith.

This quest must be honest and objective and acknowledge the cultural change which is currently changing various forms of thinking, learning and responding. The heart of the issue in Christian education today is the recognition of the poly-culture. The youth of today do not fall into a mode of identity and participation; they are presented with a situation where almost everything presents an option. Hence, it is near to impossible to initiate one into a prescribed ritual. The choice of Christ must be discussed, reflected upon and chosen. It is no longer guaranteed by birth and custom. Within the context of a Christian adult community and school environment, teachers can provide a way to understand the experience of faith and the Christian heritage. The leadership they give by the example of their lives will be a testimony to the ultimate reality: God.

The undue concern for formation--that is, the guiding of a person toward a mature religious response--often causes the collapse of the classroom atmosphere. In doing so, it destroys the possibility of effectively achieving the informational goal and thereby ministering to the intellectual needs of the student.

The role of religion teachers is to give evidence of their faith (to be witnesses) through their teaching. But any witnessing on the part of teachers that is offered as a substitute for competent teaching probably doesn't carry much weight.

To 'teach religion' does not mean manipulation, formation, stimulation to religious highs, psychological seduction, 'making Christians', forming other Christs, or memorizing dogmatic statements about religious items. Teaching religion means helping the students broaden and deepen their understanding of the Christian interpretations of the mystery of life. In this way they can make a free decision to accept or to reject that interpretation of what life is all about in the pluralistic society.

Christianity should be presented as primarily a question of people rather than things; an interpersonal communion of God and the individual person as a member of the community of God's people. Under such circumstances the student feels under no personal religious pressures and can thus enjoy the subject matter on its own terms. Understanding, rather than commitment, must be the primary focus of the religion course.

The Student

The gift which God makes of Himself to the individual Christian precedes all religion teaching. Thus, the teacher's task is not that of molding or forming a neutral object. The Spirit of God has worked a transformation which is a reality to be freely accepted later in life. Due to the presence of the Spirit, the student is capable of religious attitudes and actions beyond what adults might expect.

Religion is basically an event between God and the student as a member of the Catholic community. The Christian Ethics teacher is a voice through which Christ can speak to his members here and now. No teacher has the right or the power to determine the religious life of another person. The teacher must recognize and accept the values of freedom and personal autonomy. The only means for transforming another person is an appeal to the freedom of the other. What is at stake at every moment of human life is freedom. Freedom is the tremendous mystery of the creature who can either respond to or reject God; the source and destiny of his existence. If the appeal does not work, it cannot be put aside in favour of some other instrument.

Psychological Characteristics Of The Adolescent

The following characteristics should be interpreted rather flexibly because growth rate differs from one young person to another.

Intellectual

1. The adolescent's capacity for abstract thinking leads from concrete to logical operations.
2. The adolescent is able, first, to think inductively, then deductively.
3. The thinking of the adolescent is pervaded by feelings.
4. Intelligence, and the accumulated experience of the world on which intelligence depends, is far outstripped by the emotional richness which causes the adolescent to seek new relationships with the world and to seek a new understanding of one's place in it.

Implications for Religious Education

1. There is a development of abstract and reflective thinking about God.
2. There is usually an increased questioning of religious beliefs and often a crisis of intellectual doubt on the religious plane.
3. Adolescents return to an unconscious egocentrism, a turning in on self which isolates them in the social world from which they flee. It often shuts them up in dreams and abstract ideals, outside the concern of concrete contingencies and practical applications. Religion offers ideals and values; these cannot be imposed if acceptance and commitment are to follow. Otherwise, when a widening experience seems to contradict their religious ideals, they may either shut religion in a watertight compartment, or throw it overboard as a useless illusion.

Moral

1. Much of moral growth is tied closely to other influences, particularly social and intellectual development.
2. The adolescent develops a greater capacity to acquire knowledge of moral principles and values because of intellectual development. During adolescence moral principles, attitudes and ideals become more clearly defined.
3. Because of intellectual growth, the adolescent should be in a better position to make finer moral discriminations. This keener edge of conscience is often blunted in specific instances by strong desires, needs or anxieties.
4. Adolescents are often preoccupied with a concern about legalism.
5. Often in adolescents there is a crisis resulting from the appearance of new and difficult sexual awareness for which they are not prepared. Guilt is likely to be associated with these new feelings.
6. The adolescent is generally more sensitive to social needs and responsiblities than is the young child.
7. By middle adolescence, self-discipline should gradually replace external controls.

Implications for Religious Education

1. Teach young people what is true and good, how to distinguish good from evil and how to use the great truths of religion, such as love of God and neighbour and the value of prayer, in support of moral effort integrated with religious life.
2. At this stage young persons need the Christian religion as a religion that understands and accepts them, that does not condemn and reject them with all their vacillation and ambivalence. While they are troubled by the conviction that their experience is unique, and the certainty that no one can really understand it, it is important that the Christian religion meets them as they are and invites them to grow with the help of the Spirit. Therefore, it should not seem to promote virtues like love, kindness, obedience and purity in such a high-key, hard-sell manner that the attainment of these virtues seems hopelessly distant and impossible.
3. Help the adolescents to convert externally imposed moral conduct into an internally self-imposed, dynamic ethical system. Assist them to recognize and accept their natural impulses so that they will not repress them but transform them into something positive and constructive. In this way religion becomes a positive and liberating force, not something negative and forbidding.
4. Expose young persons to a Christianity that is characterized by love and service, not by guilt and fear. Teaching religion with exclusive emphasis on sin, guilt, punishment and expiation of guilt will normally produce an externally imposed religion when God is pictured as the vengeful-father image.
5. Present the Christian faith as the invitation of a loving Father encouraging them to grow and mature. While adolescents are experiencing a more complicated life on the outside, and must cope with new sexual urges from within, it is important that they do not perceive religion as offering them only criticism and holding out an impossible ideal.

Emotional

1. Adolescents are beginning to seek new relationships with the world and a new understanding of their place in it.
2. There frequently is an emergence of strong or even violent feelings which they often seek to hide as best they can, sometimes under a cynical and mocking exterior.
3. Adolescents are often convinced that their experience is unique. They are certain that no one can really understand.

Implications for Religious Education

1. The adolescents' new emotional development shows itself in idealism in the abstract, and admiration for significant adults in the concrete. Any religious teaching that is given needs to be of such nature as to take these characteristics seriously.
2. The great crisis of adolescence, with regard to faith, is the crisis of self-acceptance. The test is whether adolescents can understand and accept the human condition of weakness and ambivalence. It is the discovery of the human condition that often puzzles and demoralizes the adolescent.

3. Adolescents need someone who understands them and accepts them with all of their vacillation and ambivalence. Each of us needs to be understood and accepted by another before we can understand and accept ourselves.
4. Adolescents need models. While things are in such a state of flux inside and around them, they need models of faith--people who stand firm in their search for an inner, deeper faith commitment.
5. The young person must be assisted to realize that honest acceptance of self with one's good qualities as well as limitations is an absolutely essential condition for the maturation of faith.

Social

1. Approximately from age 15 to 18 many young persons experience a pulling away from their gregarious instincts towards seeking their own identity. Even though they belong to a group they want to "do their thing" regardless of what others might think.
2. A certain amount of rebellion against authority and an inclination to the jargon and styles of the peer-group is quite normal at this time.
3. Although there is the need to belong to a group, they are developing a strong need for friendship and closeness with a special person.

Implications for Religious Education

1. The ability of young persons to open themselves to the invitation of God is greatly influenced by other preoccupations. Having to deal with the crises of identity and sexuality they are left very little energy or inclination to go outside themselves and to find meaning in a relationship with God. They need all the help they can get to slowly turn the focus of their attention from inward to outward, from self to others.
2. In view of the adolescents' idealism and urge to independence, religion should be presented as an adventure; a challenge to devote one's life to the service of God and fellow man. Concrete good causes abound in the battle against the enemies of human welfare: ignorance, disease, poverty, squalor, greed, etc. To attack these gives purpose and meaning in life. Religion should not be presented as a duty to be accepted, but as a challenge to be met.
3. With the attainment of spiritual freedom, made possible by the support and encouragement of a society of free persons who trust them, adolescents come to maturity and are ready to take their full part in the community of God's people.

Course Themes

A. God and Man

1. Searching for God: Mankind's Ultimate Concern (Core)
2. Religions of the World
3. Faith and Atheism
4. Life Beyond Death

B. The Christ In Scripture

1. Jesus of the Gospels (Core)
2. The Parables of Christ
3. The Beatitudes
4. God's People in the Old Testament
5. Understanding the Bible

C. The Contemporary Christian Community

1. The Church: Pilgrim People of God (Core)
2. Christian Worship and Sacraments
3. Prayer in Contemporary Spirituality
4. Everyday Ecumenism

D. The Christian: A Person For Others

1. Christian Morality and Conscience (Core)
2. Moral Problems of Today
3. Marriage
4. Social Justice

Course Organization

In the development of this curriculum outline for Christian Ethics, the committee was guided by the knowledge of (1) the diverse school system and individual school organizations that do, and must exist for the teaching of this course, (2) the variety of training and experience backgrounds of the teachers who will be asked to implement the course, (3) the wide scope of such a course.

The Christian Ethics course must lend itself equally to the organization of a large school system with several classes per grade or to the organization of a small school where two or more grades may be grouped; to a school where all students are of one denomination or to a school where several Christian denominations may be grouped.

To achieve these objectives, the committee chose a "Thematic" approach. Seventeen themes, in four general groups were selected. Each group contains a "core" theme and some sub-themes. The committee did not assign any grade or year designation to these themes as there is not necessarily a chronological development. It is suggested that some themes may be more effectively studied by more mature students.

The local jurisdiction will organize its Christian Ethics course within the parameters of the outline to enable it to best serve local needs and to best utilize teachers and facilities. It is recommended that an allotment of approximately 120 minutes per week on a yearly basis is necessary to achieve the objectives of the program.

It is difficult to isolate course material, therefore, the themes listed under the general headings, if studied intensively (in depth), will cause some overlapping. Most themes could be studied in such depth as to have a one (1), one-half (1/2), or one-quarter (1/4) credit value. Thus, a course in any one year could be:

1. a "core" theme studied intensively;
2. a "core" theme studied in some depth (1/2 credit) and two other themes studied extensively (1/4 credit each);
3. a "core" theme and one other studied in some depth (1/2 credit each);
4. a "core" theme and three others studied extensively (1/4 credit each).

One "core" theme must be studied each year. The core themes are: Searching for God: Mankind's Ultimate Concern, Jesus of the Gospels, The Church: Pilgrim People of God, Christian Morality and Conscience.

Some of the themes are better suited for treatment in Grade 11 or Grade 12. These are: Searching for God: Mankind's Ultimate Concern, Religions of the World, Faith and Atheism, Life Beyond Death, Christian Morality and Conscience, Moral Problems of Today, Marriage, Social Justice. Since many high schools are organized on a 9-12 basis, the Grade 9 program can be a study of one or more themes including one core theme as outlined previously.

The report to the Department of Education will be **one** mark for Christian Ethics for each year of study in Division IV, Christian Ethics 10, Christian Ethics 20 and Christian Ethics 30.

As indicated, a "credit" may be earned in a number of ways. A "core" theme studied in depth can be a credit. If this is done, the teacher will ordinarily cover all, or most of the sub-themes in that group. A "credit" may be earned by studying extensively a number of themes including a "core" theme. For example, if it was decided to study **God and Man** in Grade 11, the school or system may decide to treat the theme "Searching for God: Mankind's Ultimate Concern" intensively. In this, the sub-themes "Religions of the World," "Faith and Atheism," "Life Beyond Death" will be treated.

Another school or system may decide to study these four themes extensively, as individual packages but with some overlapping.

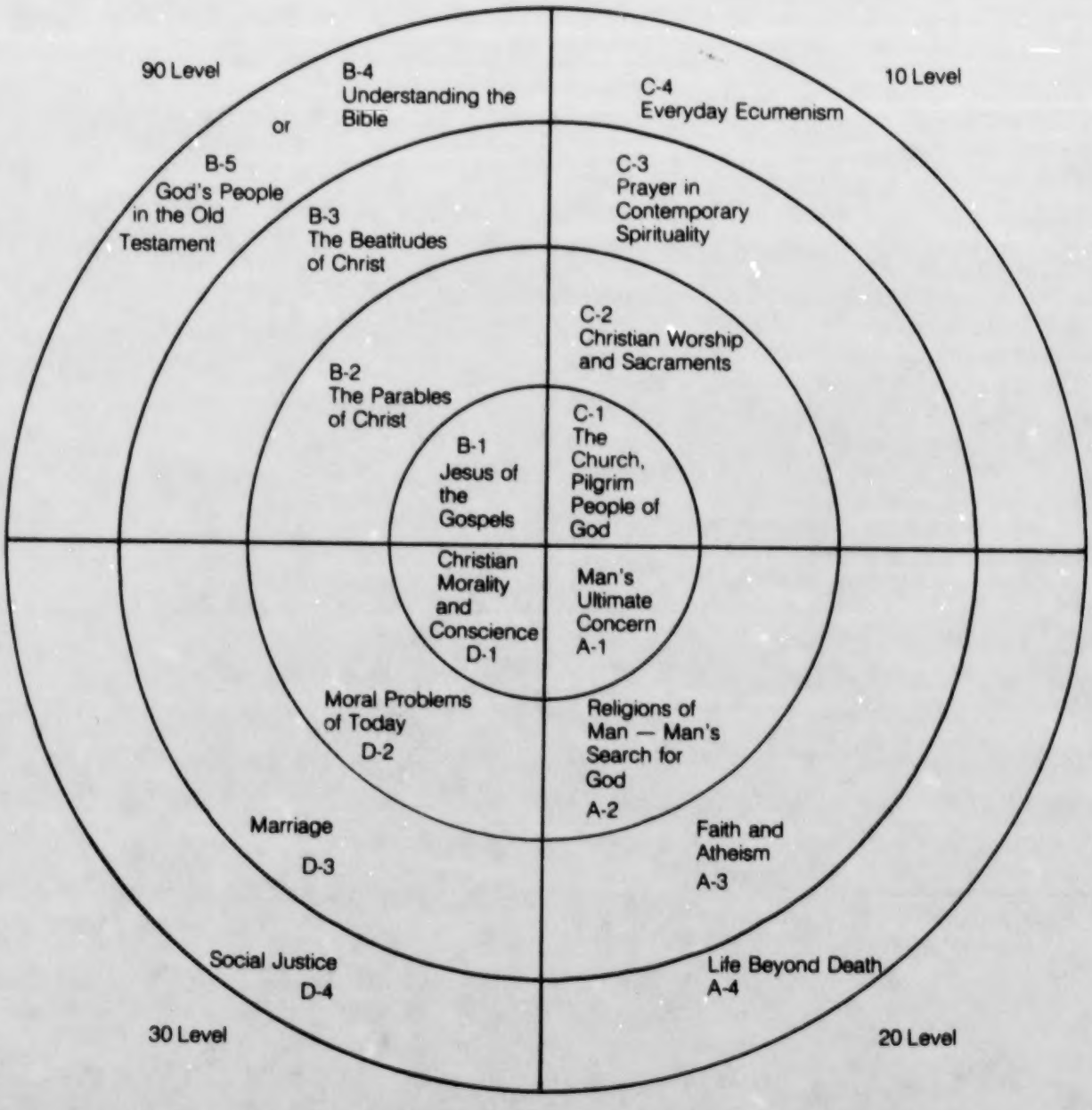
Another organizational pattern may be grouping of grades such as 9 and 10; 11 and 12, etc. If the decision was to do Themes B and C in Grades 9 and 10, these students so grouped could do Theme B in one year and C the next year. Similarly, with Themes A and D in Grades 11 and 12. By the end of high school, Themes A, B, C and D will have been studied. Grades 9, 10, 11, and 12 may be taught as one group. Rotating through the various themes a student will have studied the four groups by the end of high school.

(Refer to diagrams in examples one and two and three and four)

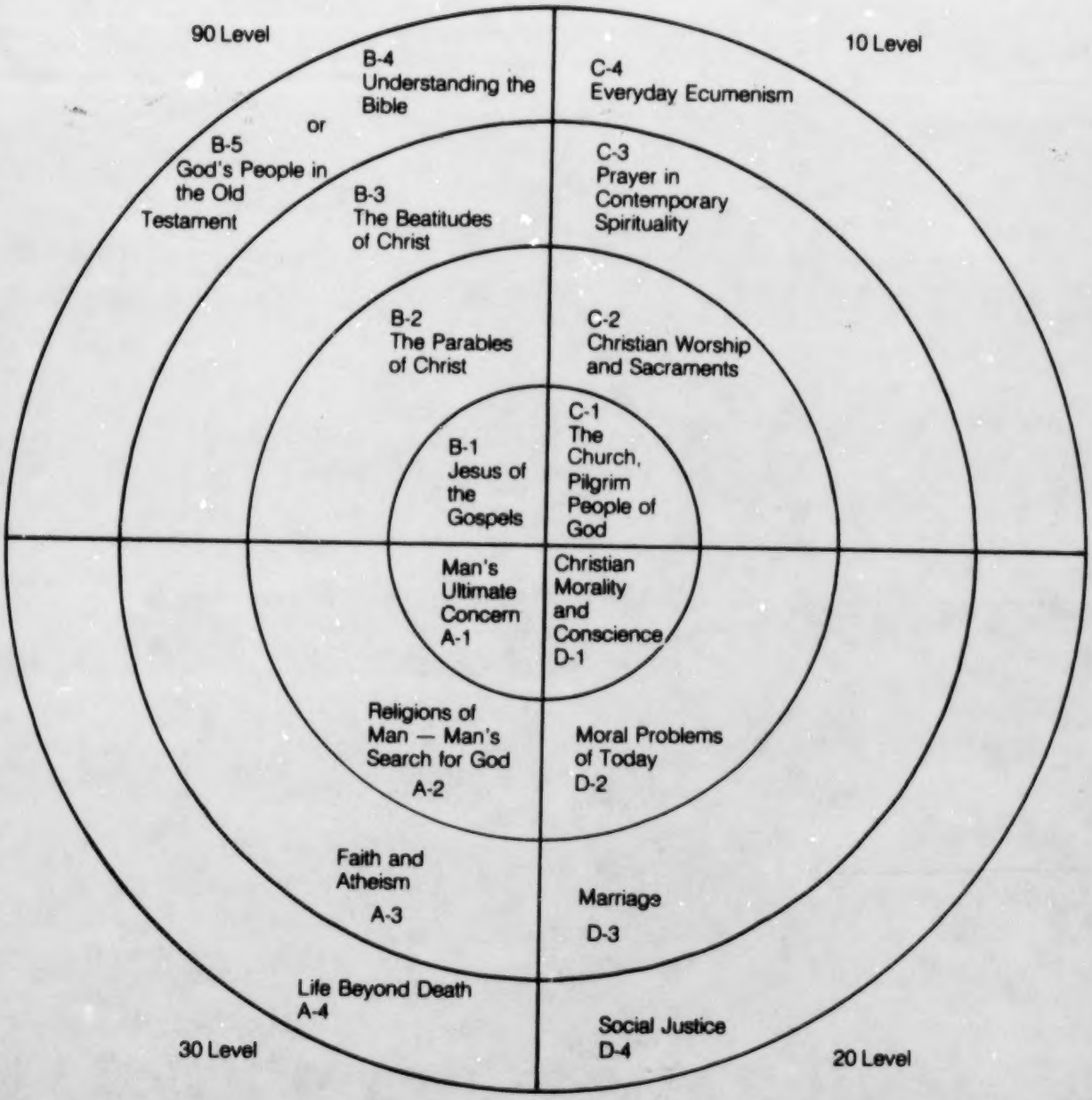
The Curriculum Guide gives a description of the themes and learnings that are expected to occur in each unit, as well as giving assistance to the teacher in terms of suggested procedures, strategies, materials, etc. The themes are by no means all inclusive. All are open to constant revision and improvement.

Although the student texts listed at the beginning of each theme are recommended by the committee, prepared programs, such as **Hi-Time** which adequately cover the themes, may be adopted.

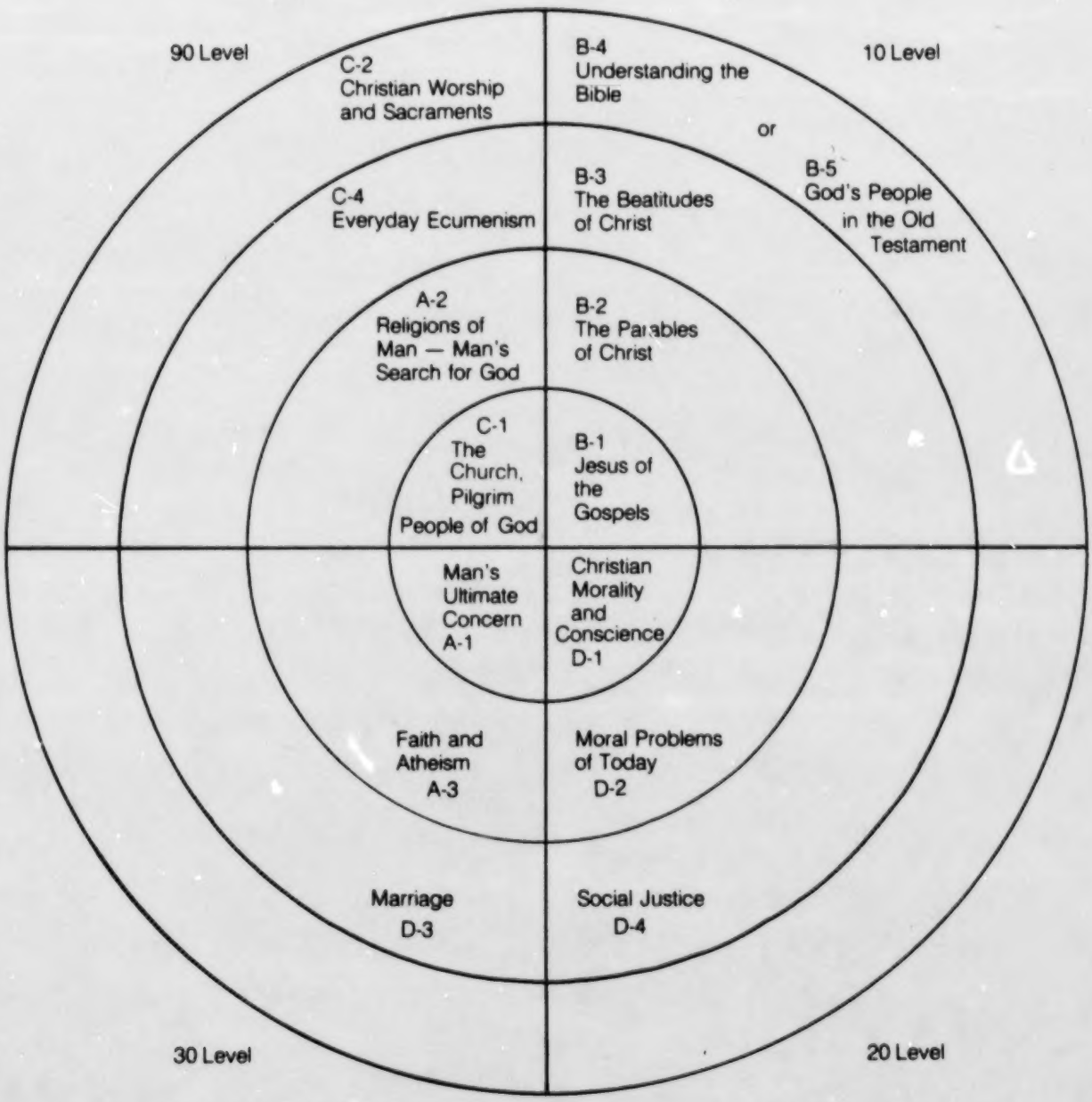
Example One


90 Level
B-4
Understanding the
Bible
or
B-5
God's People
in the Old
Testament
10 Level
C-4
Everyday Ecumenism
C-3
Prayer in
Contemporary
Spirituality
B-3
The Beatitudes
of Christ
C-2
Christian Worship
and Sacraments
B-2
The Parables
of Christ
B-1
Jesus of
the
Gospels
C-1
The
Church,
Pilgrim
People of
God
Christian
Morality
and
Conscience
D-1
Man's
Ultimate
Concern
A-1
Moral Problems
of Today
D-2
Religions of
Man — Man's
Search for
God
A-2
Marriage
D-3
Faith and
Atheism
A-3
Social Justice
D-4
Life Beyond Death
A-4
30 Level
20 Level

Example Two

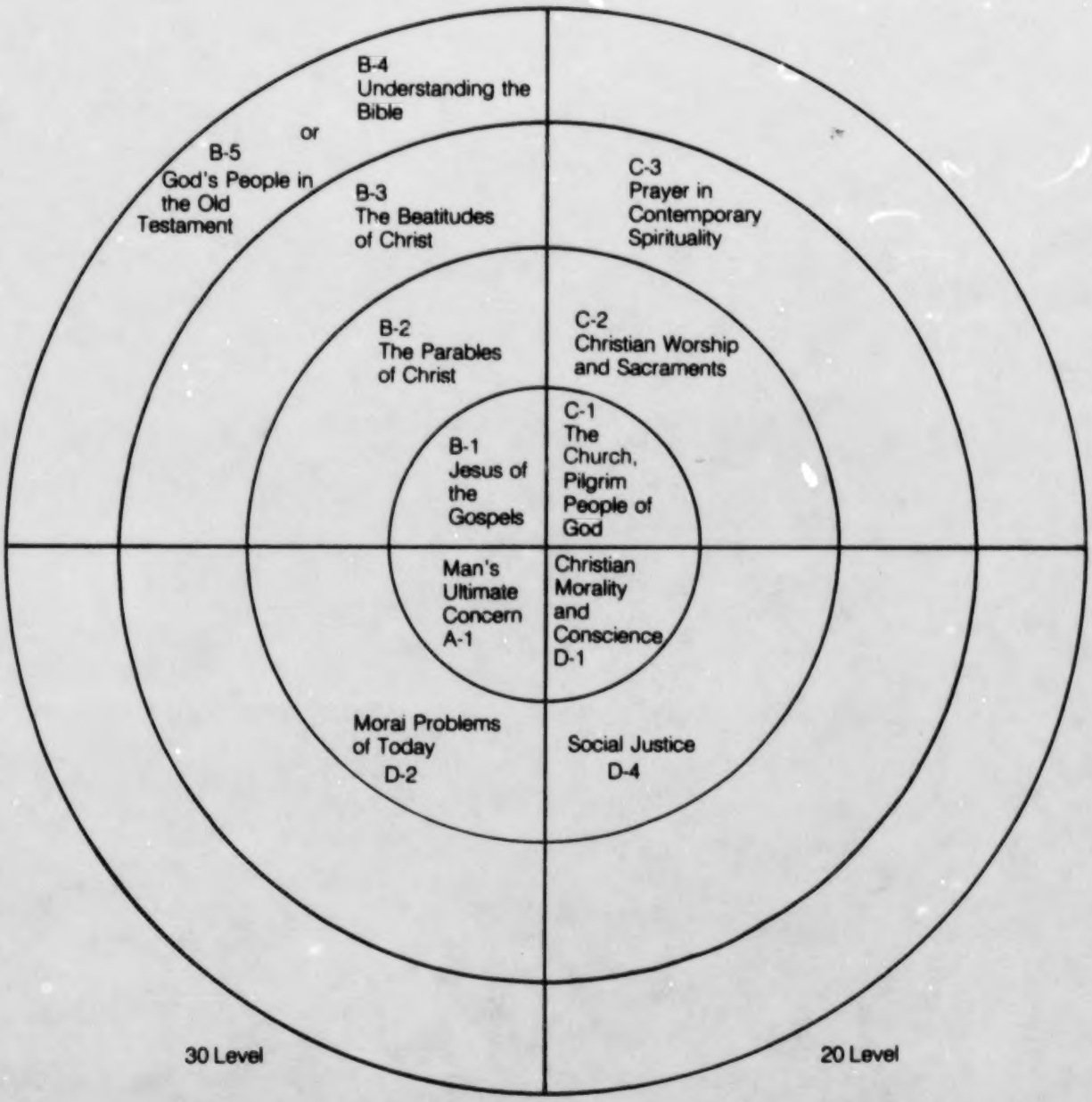

90 Level
10 Level
B-4
Understanding the
Bible
or
B-5
God's People in
the Old
Testament
C-4
Everyday Ecumenism
C-3
Prayer in
Contemporary
Spirituality
B-3
The Beatitudes
of Christ
B-2
The Parables
of Christ
C-2
Christian Worship
and Sacraments
C-1
The
Church,
Pilgrim
People of
God
B-1
Jesus of
the
Gospels
Man's
Ultimate
Concern
A-1
Christian
Morality
and
Conscience
D-1
Religions of
Man — Man's
Search for God
A-2
Moral Problems
of Today
D-2
Faith and
Atheism
A-3
Marriage
D-3
Life Beyond Death
A-4
Social Justice
D-4
30 Level
20 Level

Example Three — Three themes rather than four are selected for levels 20 and 30. Allows for more intensive study.



14c

Example Four – Three themes selected for Level 10. Two themes for levels 20 and 30.



Evaluating Student Progress

Not everything in the field of religious education can be measured in a purely scientific-quantitative way. The subject matter deals with values and meaning, feelings and attitudes, as well as abstract truths.

Teaching occurs at three levels, each with its specific kind of evaluation. To illustrate these levels, we shall use the Thanksgiving Story and Christ's Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem (Mark 11, 1-19 and Luke 19, 28-40).

Fact Level

Specific items of information are sought, such as the principles or articles of faith, or basic facts and data. Multiple choice questions and short answer tests are used to evaluate learning.

Thanksgiving Story

The teacher might ask, "What date, year, etc. the Pilgrims landed on Plymouth Rock."

Triumphant Entry

"What instructions did Jesus give his two disciples? Did it go just as Jesus said it would go? What was the reaction of the Pharisees to the large crowd of Jesus' disciples who were praising him? How did Jesus answer the Pharisees?"

Concept Level

Understanding emerges as series of facts are linked and generalizations drawn. Matters of faith are subject to analysis, interpretation, degree of relevance, etc. Students must be encouraged to seek truth rather than simply collect opinions. The teacher is likely to use essay questions, research papers, class or individual projects to evaluate learning.

Thanksgiving Story

The class might discuss freedom of religion and freedom of emigration, perhaps making comparisons with other historical and contemporary events.

Triumphant Entry

"What is the meaning of Jesus riding into the city of Jerusalem on an ass? What were the people who threw palm branches before Him expecting to have happen? What are the important distinctions between the Pharisees and the disciples?"

Value Level

This level is most important of all. It deals with attitudes, appreciation of values and consistent behaviour. It directly involves students in examining their own values. It asks many "you" questions and insists that the students confront issues suggested by the content. These issues should involve them in choices which are relevant to their day-to-day life. It demands active **participation**.

Thanksgiving Story

The teacher might ask the class questions like, "Is there anything you value so strongly that you would leave this province or country if it were taken away?" "If you had to cross the ocean and, like the pilgrims, could only take one suitcase full of belongings, what do you prize so much that you would put it in that suitcase?"

Triumphant Entry

"Would you have been able to turn over the tables of money changers in the temple? Wasn't this violent and destructive of private property? Is this anything like the cases of students who force deans out of their offices? Or like the cases of persons who burn draft board files? Have you ever participated in an act that destroyed property? Name a time when you feel you could do so. The disciples seemed to have no embarrassment about demonstrating their beliefs in public. How easy is it for you to announce to anyone what you believe when it is unpopular or you might be punished for doing so? Have you ever participated in a demonstration for civil rights? Why? What kinds of demonstrations do you think are acceptable? When should people participate in a demonstration?"

Good planning is absolutely essential. When we set out to teach, we should know beforehand what we would like students to know or to do, what attitudes, values and facts we would like them to develop as a result of our teaching. Once the objective is clear, the teacher will be able to plan the lesson accordingly and evaluate realistically the specific learnings of the student.

From the above it is evident that evaluation, in terms of marks, is possible at the fact and concept level, but becomes very subjective at the value level. At this latter level, the teacher cannot make any purely quantitative measurements and evaluations. All the teacher can do is to give a rather subjective evaluation of the signs of faith observed in the life of the students.

Aspects To Be Evaluated

Particularly at the concept level the following aspects may be evaluated or receive marks:

Concepts: having a basic understanding of certain concepts relevant to the discussion of a topic.

Ability to Evaluate: the degree to which the significance of a concept or situation is gleaned from information, e.g., moral questions or "signs of the times."

Research Efforts: indicating a desire for more learning, and an inquisitive mind capable of asking relevant questions.

Presentation: having the ability to make oneself understood by another through effective use of language.

Participation: positive contributions made in the context of class discussion or research projects.

Work Habits: the manner of dealing with assignments.

Theme A: God And Man

A.1 Sub-theme: **Searching for God: Mankind's Ultimate Concern**

General Objectives

This course is directed to both believers and non-believers, to convinced and merely cultural Christians, to anyone interested in re-examining the basis or possibility of faith in God as He is known in the Christian tradition. Through study and experience of encounters and interpersonal relationships, both human and divine, students are invited to respond freely to the gift of friendship offered by God and fellow humans.

Method

The approach throughout this course is to develop the faith life of the student. Faith is seen also as a dynamic force which can shape our lives and our personalities in a strong, positive way. The course explores related concepts of mystery, freedom, trust, truth, evil, suffering, commitment and fidelity.

Faith is not simply an intellectual operation, but rather a gift from God, alive and capable of bringing meaning and understanding to life. The student will receive an opportunity to study the different dimensions of religious faith and examine the roots of his or her own religious faith.

Course Divisions

1. **Believing Is Seeing**

   Objectives:

   To help students understand that faith is a response to life's experiences.

   To stimulate students to feel that trusting in life and having faith in God, the author of life, is a rewarding and fulfilling experience.

   To aid students in affirming and increasing their trust in the experiences of their lives and their faith in God.

2. **Growing In Faith**

   Objectives:

   To help students understand that mature faith is the result of a developmental process.

   To help students appreciate that they are a part of humanity's search for a viable image of God.

   To encourage students to make consistent efforts to arrive at a mature faith.

3. **Doubting and Trusting**

   Objectives:

   To help students understand that finding meaning in their lives is essential to having faith.

   To encourage students to feel that the search for meaning in their life experiences is a necessary and valuable endeavor.

   To assist students in making consistent efforts to discover meaning in, as well as to create new meaning for, their experiences.

4. **Being Free**

   Objectives:

   To aid students in understanding that freedom is closely related to faithfulness.

   To encourage students to decide that it is a worthwhile pursuit to strive toward the goal of responsible freedom.

   To support students in their attempts to exercise freedom in a responsible manner.

5. **Truth and Faith**

   Objectives:

   To assist students in understanding the concept of truth and its relationship to faith.

   To encourage students to trust the truths held by the church.

   To encourage students to make decisions that are informed by the teachings of Jesus Christ and the church.

6. **Hope and Suffering**

   Objectives:

   To enable students to see suffering and evil as unavoidable facets of life and begin to understand their kinds of causes.

   To assist students to realize that meaning can be found in suffering and evil.

   To encourage students to live as persons of hope and to strive toward making the world a better place.

7. **Shaping the Experience**

   Objectives:

   To help students understand that religious symbols are meant to express life's deepest realities.

   To bring students to an appreciation of the richness of religious symbolism as it evolved and was refined in the Judaeo-Christian tradition.

   To enable students to share in the rituals and symbols of church life in a more meaningful way.

8. **Sharing the Experience**

   Objectives:

   To help students understand the nature and purpose of communities, especially religious communities.

   To help students affirm the communality of their feelings of need for other people.

   To encourage students active participation in the parish religious communities to which they belong.

9. **Belonging Together**

   Objectives:

   To develop students realization that their individual membership in the church must be the result of a mature personal decision.

To enhance students appreciation for the value which their parents attached to the Catholic community as well as their appreciation for their own freedom of choice in deciding whether to continue to belong to it.

To aid the students growth toward making a mature personal commitment to the Catholic community.

10. **Building the Vision**

    Objectives:

    To help students comprehend that a mature committed faith requires action to nourish and sustain.

    To assist students in evaluating their own faith to see whether it is a living reality or merely something to which they give lip service.

    To encourage students to live their faith through charity.

11. **Faith Beyond Today**

    Objectives:

    To aid students in realizing that Jesus is their foremost examplar in the journey of faith.

    To assist students in appreciating more fully the reality of Jesus' human nature.

    To exhort students to model their lives upon the example of Jesus' living faith.

A.2 Sub-theme: **Religions of the World**

General Objectives

To bring students to a greater understanding of their own search for fulfillment in Christ.

To bring students to an understanding of the similarities and differences in the major religions of the world through the study of selected elements common to these religions.

To bring students to an awareness of mankind's search for God as expressed in the major religions of the world.

Specific Objectives

To show similarities among the five religions.

To show differences among the five religions.

To bring students to an awareness of how various religions have answered mankind's ultimate questions.

To bring students to a deeper awareness of the divergent beliefs and resultant lifestyles.

Course Divisions

1. **Man's Search for Meaning**

    Objective:

    To bring students to an understanding of the term "Religion."

    To enable students to differentiate between the terms "Religion," "Sect" and "Cult."

Suggested Activities:

1. Students could be asked to discuss the various definitions of the term "Religion."
2. The teacher should solicit questions about the meaning of life from students (i.e., questions relating to purpose of life, death, after-life, pain, good and evil, suffering).
3. The teacher should structure the discussion in such a way as to bring the students to an understanding that "Religion" is an attempt to answer these ultimate questions.

Evaluation:

Have students provide answers from their own religion to one or more of the ultimate questions discussed in class.

2. **Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Judaism, Christianity**

The following aspects should be studied for **each religion**.

- Origin of religion
- The concept of God
- The forms of worship
- Man's relationship with his fellow man
- Items added by the teacher

Suggested Activities:

1. Students could research and make class presentations on the art and architecture of the specific religion under study.
2. Students could be asked to role play sections (e.g., Four Passing Sights of Buddhism).
3. The teacher could show and discuss films and filmstrips (e.g., Hinduism, N.F.B. Buddhism, Islam).
4. The students could be directed to library research (e.g., The Origin of a Religion).
5. Speakers (who are followers of the religion being studied) could share their views and beliefs with the students.
6. Use could be made of the "Suggestions for Further Study" at the end of each section in the student text.
7. Summary charts and wall posters could be used effectively to bring about awareness in the students of the similarities and the differences among the major world religions.

A.3 Sub-theme: **Faith and Atheism**

General Objectives

To bring students to an understanding of the elements of religious faith.

To bring students to appreciate that Christian faith gives meaning and direction to one's life.

To bring students to an awareness of contemporary forms of atheism and the effects of these philosophies in our society.

To bring students to an understanding that Christian faith requires a commitment to the person of Christ and subsequent discipleship.

Course Divisions

1. **Current Faith Problems of Students**

   Objectives:

   To have students recognize and discuss some of their concerns related to faith.

   To have students assess some of the factors affecting their beliefs and attitudes, e.g., science, media technology, psychology, humanism, secularization.

   Suggested Activities:

   1. Have students identify as specifically as possible some of the sources for their concept of God.
   2. Have students critically examine ads and identify the values and goals proposed in specific passages of scripture.

   Evaluation:

   Students could write a response to the objection: "How can a good God permit suffering?"

2. **Contemporary Forms of Atheism**

   Objectives:

   To bring students to an awareness of some of the various forms of religious nonbelief.

   To have students recognize the influence of present day philosophies on their ways of thinking and acting.

   To have students recognize that everyone **believes** something.

   Suggested Activities:

   1. Research the following philosophies to see how they influence our present day society:

      (a) materialism
      (b) humanism
      (c) theism
      (d) atheism
      (e) antitheism
      (f) agnosticism

      The teacher should point out how each philosophy differs essentially from the Christian view of man.

   2. Students should examine and discuss some of the statements regarding atheism made in the Vatican II document, The Church Today, No. 19-21.
   3. Have students respond to some of the objections to religion made by atheistic thinkers.
   4. Support the statement: Atheism requires faith, just as Christianity does.

3. **Christian Faith**

Objectives:

To bring students to an understanding of Christian faith as a gift and response--God offers and calls, man is free to respond and accept. The ability to respond to the invitation to believe and accept a God who remains faithful and loving even when we are not, requires a great openness throughout a lifetime. Students should be led to appreciate that one's response can be deepened by contact with the reality of God in scripture, in the sacraments, in prayer and in the witness of the Christian community.

To present faith as a commitment to the person of Christ and an acceptance of discipleship.

To bring students to an understanding that faith gives meaning and direction to one's life.

To lead students to recognize that the Christian is called upon to take the initiative in building a better world.

Suggested Activities:

1. Read **Man's Search for Meaning** by Victor Frankle.
2. Identify the great variety of undertakings which require an act of faith and therefore a risk.
3. Have students write a personal creed.
4. A study could be made of the scriptural passages on the theme of faith.
5. Request an essay or have an exam based on the key concepts regarding Christian faith.

A.4 Sub-theme: **Life Beyond Death**

General Objectives

To help students understand their own and society's attitudes toward death and dying and to try to come to a Christian attitude toward death.

To help students understand the meaning of the resurrection of Jesus and its implication for their lives.

To help students understand the meaning of heaven, judgment, hell and the end of the world according to the Christian tradition.

To help students enter into Christian celebration of death and resurrection.

Course Divisions

1. **Attitudes Toward Death**

Objectives:

To help students become aware of their own attitudes toward death.

To help students become aware of prevalent attitudes toward death in our society today.

To help students become aware of Jesus' attitude toward death.

To help students understand death as a gift given by God.

2. **The Process of Dying**

   Objectives:

   To help students develop calm and positive attitudes toward the process of dying.

   To help students understand the stages of dying and the stages of grief so as to enable them to relate more effectively to friends and relatives who may be going through these stages.

   To help students appreciate the meaning of "death with dignity."

3. **Death in Scripture**

   Objectives:

   To help students understand the differences between the earthly life to which the persons in the scriptures were raised and the glorious, heavenly life enjoyed by the risen Christ.

   To help students realize that these eight "raised" persons in the scripture had not reached the stage of real and absolute death, but that Jesus did.

4. **The Resurrection of Jesus**

   Objectives:

   To have students understand that the resurrection of Jesus is completely different from the eight examples of "raisings" in the scripture.

   To have students understand that the resurrection of Jesus is the foundation of our faith in Him as God and Savior.

5. **Heaven**

   Objectives:

   To help students appreciate the implications of Christ's resurrection for our own personal resurrection.

   To help students appreciate the meaning of the "communion of saints" and "life everlasting."

6. **The Last Judgment, Heaven and Hell**

   Objectives:

   To help students realize that the Last Judgment is God's affirmation of the choice they will have made either **for** God or **against** God.

   To help students understand that every person is judged, ultimately, according to how well he or she has loved during his or her lifetime.

   To help students understand that hell is of one's own choosing.

7. **The End of the World**

   Objectives:

   To help students understand that all creation is redeemed; therefore, all of created reality will be transformed and share in the glorious life of the risen Christ.

   To help students understand that the risen Christ is present and active in the events of human history, now and always.

8. **The Celebration of Death and Resurrection**

Objectives:

To help students understand that,through the sacrament of the anointing of the sick, we celebrate the Resurrection-Victory of Christ over sickness, suffering, aging and death.

To help students develop a deeper appreciation of all of life, especially that of the elderly, the sick and the suffering.

To impress upon students the need to share in the service of love within the church, especially to those who are sick and to join with them in the celebration of the sacrament of the sick.

To help students appreciate the funeral liturgy and the Easter liturgy.

Theme B: The Christ In Scripture

B.1 Sub-theme: **Jesus of the Gospels**

General Objectives

This course will lead to a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between the Jesus of the gospels and students of today.

The Jesus found in the Scripture will be carefully studied so that students will be thoroughly familiar with the Jesus who lived among us, suffered, died and rose. The role of Jesus throughout history will be analyzed so that the humanity and divinity of Jesus Christ will be clearly perceived by students.

The special place of Jesus in our worship, in our history and in our future are considered so that students will be strengthened in faith.

Course Divisions

1. **The Search for Jesus**

   Objectives:

   To help students understand that the true identity of Jesus can be found by studying the Christian Scriptures, especially the four gospels.

   To assist students to be interested in this study of Jesus as fresh and relevant even though they have already learned much about him.

   To encourage students to talk freely and openly about Jesus.

2. **Jesus: One of Us**

   Objectives:

   To help students understand that Jesus is fully human and that He had to grow, learn, make choices, and be tested.

   To help students have a healthy love and respect for their own humanness through a study of Jesus as fully one of us.

   To help students face the decisions and difficult tests of their lives in the spirit of Jesus.

3. **The Identity of Jesus**

   Objectives:

   To help students understand how Jesus arrived at this human identity.

   To encourage students to esteem highly the process of sharing one's identity and to have respect and confidence in their own identity formation.

   To assist students in examining the effects of their choices on their identity and sense of self-worth.

4. **Jesus of Freedom**

   Objectives:

   To help students understand what Jesus meant by true freedom.

   To assist students to prize true Christian freedom as a personal ideal.

   To encourage students to make free decisions.

5. **Jesus and Sinners**

   Objectives:

   To help students understand Jesus' teaching on sin.

   To encourage students to be open to the gift of God's grace in times of celebration as well as those of need.

   To assist students to reach out to others in the same spirit of understanding and concern that Jesus did.

6. **A Teacher Sent by god**

   Objectives:

   To help students understand the power and purpose of the teaching mission of Jesus.

   To encourage in students a receptivity and openness to the message taught by Jesus.

   To enable students to express in their lives the teachings of Jesus.

7. **Jesus and the Spirit**

   Objectives:

   To help students understand the meaning of the Spirit in the life of Jesus.

   To assist students to be open to the active presence of the Spirit within them.

   To aid students to live Christian lives under the Spirit's guidance.

8. **Jesus: A Person of Prayer**

   Objectives:

   To help students understand the meaning of prayer and the central role of prayer in the life of Jesus.

   To encourage students to be open to the power of prayer in their lives.

   To assist students in developing the habit of prayer in their daily lives.

9. **The Death of Jesus**

   Objectives:

   To help students understand Jesus' death as a truly human experience.

   To bring students to a positive attitude about death, including their own.

   To encourage students to live integral and meaningful lives which prepare for and transcend death.

10. **He is Risen**

    Objectives:

    To help students understand the meaning of the resurrection.

    To assist students to be open in faith so that they too may experience the risen Jesus through the Spirit.

    To encourage students to celebrate the joy of the resurrection in their own lives.

11. **I Will Build My Church**

Objectives:

To help students understand the meaning of Church and kingdom and how these concepts relate to Jesus.

To enable students to identify in mind and heart with the Church, the people of God, as a way of life.

To encourage students to take an active part in today's efforts to revitalize the Church.

12. **Jesus Christ: Yesterday, Today and Tommorow**

Objectives:

To help students understand Jesus' dynamic activity in the world today and Jesus' role in the future things to come.

To encourage in students a desire to work with Jesus in building a better world.

To encourage students to become actively involved in the growth and development of the world at whatever level they can.

B.2 Sub-theme: **The Parables of Christ**

General Objectives

To put students in touch with the words and message of Jesus and how He speaks to us in the crises of life.

To show how Jesus challenged people to be real, to sort out their lives.

To initiate students into the Kingdom of God--its nature, its promise, its challenges, requirements and benefits of membership in it. To show how the appeal of the parables is timeless and universal and why they are truly for today.

Method

Using background material, task sheets and audio-visual aids each parable will answer these questions:

a) What message did Jesus have in mind?

b) How does this message apply to us today?

c) What does it say about the Kingdom of God or membership in it?

Course Divisions

1. **What is a Parable?**

Objective:

To acquaint students with the nature of a parable, as found in both the Old and New Testament.

2. **Why the Parables?**

Objectives:

To assist students to become aware that parables at times reveal and illustrate that

they are not always self-evident but at times may even conceal.

To assist students to meet Jesus the story-teller.

3. **Whence the Parables?**

   Objective:

   To assist students to situate the geographical locale of the parables and realize that we are dealing with down-to-earth, real-life characters, in whom we can see ourselves.

4. **Interpreting the Parables Today**

   Objective:

   To assist students to discover what message Jesus had in mind and what God is saying to us today through the parables. Four basic principles are examined.

5. **The Kingdom of God as a Present Reality**

   Objective:

   To assist students to become aware that God's presence is found in the here-and-now, that the long-awaited day has come. God visits His people as we discover in the parables of the Great Supper, the Wedding Feast, the Mustard Seed, New Wine and Old Wineskins.

6. **The Kingdom of God as Demand — The Call of Decision**

   Objective:

   To show students the kingdom of God has come and is in the process of full realization; this demands a call to decision by its followers. This call is seen in the following parables: The Hidden Treasure, The Unjust Steward, The Tower and War.

7. **The God of the Parables**

   Objective:

   To clearly establish for students the kind of God Jesus revealed to us: A God of grace and mercy. We discover this God in the parables of the Gracious Father and The Gracious Employer.

8. **The Final Judgment**

   Objective:

   To help students realize that the God of grace will judge the world, in God's way, not ours. We see this in the parables of the Sheep and Goats, the Great net and the Wheat and the Tares.

9. **Conclusion**

   Objective:

   To show students the disciple of Christ must pay a price by putting faith into action.

B.3 Sub-theme: **The Beatitudes**

General Objectives

Help students see the difference between relationships based on law and those based on love; to show students that the beatitudes are an expression of personal religion.

Help students to see that the beatitudes define the kingdom of God in terms that turn the values of our marketplace society upside down; insist that caring for and sharing with others, particularly those who have the least, is of the highest priority of a Christian.

Introductory Activity

Have students list eight occasions in life when they experienced happiness. Tabulate them and rank order the top eight "happy experiences" in the class. Compare them with the "eight ways to be happy" according to Jesus as found in the beatitudes. What did the class discover about themselves? About Jesus?

Course Divisions

1. **The Kingdom is Coming**

   Objective:

   To introduce students to the idea of the Kingdom of God and true happiness.

2. **The Sacred and the Secular**

   Objective:

   To help students clarify their idea of the Kingdom of God through a study of Jesus' teaching in the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus teaches us that all life is one.

3. **The Poor in Spirit**

   Objective:

   To explain to students the meaning of the beatitude "How happy are the poor in spirit." Jesus tells us that happiness belongs to those who want little.

4. **Happy Those Who Mourn**

   Objective:

   To explain to students the meaning of the beatitude "Happy those who mourn" and extend compassionate help to the less fortunate.

5. **The Price of Justice**

   Objective:

   To explain to students the meaning of the beatitude "Happy those who suffer persecution in the cause of justice."

6. **Mercy Means Compassion**

   Objective:

   To explain to students the meaning of the beatitude "Happy the Merciful." Mercy means reaching out to cure loneliness and alienation.

7. **The Just Society**

   Objective:

   To explain to students the meaning of the beatitude "Happy those who hunger and thirst for justice." Justice is an essential concern of the Church.

8. **Bringing Peace to God's People**

   Objective:

   To explain to students the meaning of the beatitude "Happy the peace-makers." Arrange for students to see some modern peacemakers in action.

9. **Happy the Single-Hearted**

   Objective:

   To explain to students the meaning of the beatitude "Happy the single-hearted." It means to see the presence of God everywhere in the world, not just in the beautiful and the pleasant.

10. **Recap**

    Objective:

    To review and evaluate the topics covered.

B.4 Sub-theme: **God's People in the Old Testament**

General Objectives

To help students appreciate the Jewish religious roots of our Christian faith.

To help students understand the history of salvation and to see their own lives as part of that history.

To help students learn how God dealt with persons in the Old Testament and to see these persons as models for their own relationship with God.

To help students understand that all are called into a covenant relationship with God and to appreciate how law and love are part of that covenant relationship.

To help students understand the events of the Old Testament and to understand the religious meaning of those events.

To help students understand that the story of the Old Testament is the story of God's intervention in the world so that mankind might be brought to fulfillment in Christ.

Course Divisions

1. **Bibliographic Pre-history**

   Objectives:

   To help students understand that the first eleven chapters of Genesis are a theological interpretation of God's relations with people in pre-history.

   To help students understand that the biblical account of creation resembles the ancient pagan accounts in the imagery used, but the concept of God has been purified.

   To help students appreciate that everything God made is good and that evil exists as a result of man's abuse of his freedom.

2. **Folk History/Peoplehood**

Objectives:

To help students appreciate that their religion is a relationship with God based on faith, hope and love; and to help them to identify their religion with that of the patriarchs who are "personificiations" of faith, hope and love.

To help students understand that the stories of the patriarchs, although basically true, are "slanted" to show how God took care of His people in all the events of history.

To help students appreciate the central importance of the Exodus in the history of Israel, and to understand the meaning of the covenant between God and His people.

To help students understand the place of the Ten Commandments within the covenant-relationship between God and His people, and to appreciate that they also stand in a covenant relationship with God.

Suggested Activities:

1. Discuss Abraham as the personification of faith; Jacob as the personification of hope; and Joseph as the personification of forgiving love. Have students ask their parents to tell them stories of family ancestors who were also "personifications" of faith, hope and love.
2. Have students imagine that they are among the Israelites whom Moses led from Egypt and have them publish a newspaper to encourage their fellow wanderers to continue walking through the wilderness to the Promised Land. The following guidelines may help in planning your paper:

   Front Page Headlines:

   "Slave Murders Boss" Exodus 2:11-15
   "New Burdens for Slaves" Exodus 5:1-21
   "Egypt Declared Disaster Area" Exodus 7:20-11:10
   "Economy Crippled by Walkout" Exodus 13:17-24:31
   "Decisive Battle Routs Enemies" Exodus 17:8-16
   "Sinai Erupts" Exodus 1-25

   Announcements:

   New Judges Appointed Exodus 18:13-27

   Editorials:

   "This Age of Protest"
   "Has It Been Worth It?"
   "March for Freedom"
   "Back to Egypt and Security"

   Women's Section:

   Engagements Exodus 2:16-21
   News From the Royal Family Exodus 2:1-10
   Today's Menu Exodus 16:13-36
   Men's Fashions Exodus 28:39-43

Music World:

Latest Hit Chronicles 15
Miriam's Melody Exodus 15:21

Religion:

What's New in Religious Experiences Exodus 3:2-6
Newest Liturgical Rites Exodus 24:3-8
"My Answer" by Billy "Moses" Graham Exodus 22, 23

Sports:

Cross-country Trek Exodus 16:1-12

Legal Section:

Recent Legislation Exodus 20:1-16

Comics:

Exodus 14:24-29

Classified Ads:

E.g., for water sweetner Exodus 15:22-25

Obituaries, Almanac (What's on for entertainment)

3. **Peoplehood/Nationhood**

Objectives:

To help students realize that God put up with the many infidelities of His Chosen People and remained faithful to them.

To help students appreciate, through the story of King David, the communal dimension of the relationship with God.

To help students appreciate liturgy as the public expression of community worship and to understand the historical background and meaning of the psalms.

Suggested Activity:

Have students select ten of their favorite psalms, rewrite them in their own words, and illustrate them with appropriate pictures or drawings.

4. **Nationhood/Exile**

Objectives:

To help students understand that the prophets were inspired by God to speak to His people on His behalf, judging their wrong-doing and encouraging them to keep the Covenant.

To help students realize that the prophets accused the Israelites of idolatry, formalism, oppression of the poor and reliance on political power and to help them become aware of how these accusations are valid in today's world.

To help students understand that, although only the individual is responsible for his sin, every sin weakens the bond that unites the community to God.

5. **Exile/Remnant Community**

Objectives:

To help students understand that in the suffering of the exile, Israel came to understand her mission as a worshipping community.

To help students realize, with the author of Job, that the innocent suffer in order that human beings may learn to be dependent upon God and to grow in love of Him.

To help students understand that, on their return from exile, the Jews' extreme devotion to their faith led them to consider God as their exclusive property and to help students appreciate the universality of God's love.

Suggested Activities:

1. Pose the following situations: You have been exiled, along with your people, to a non-Christian country (to another planet) and have not been allowed to take anything to remind you of home. It is your task to plan an activity that will help your group preserve a sense of national unity and identity. When the groups have finished, have them share their chosen activities.
2. Ask: Did this exercise help you to better appreciate the problems faced by the exiled Israelites? Why or why not? Did you find, as the Israelites did, that you needed somthing similar to a "sabbath sense" to preserve your religious and national identity?

6. **Remnant Community**

Objectives:

To help students understand that belief in an after-life of reward and punishment was a very late development in Jewish thought.

To help students understand that in times of persecution biblical writers used highly symbolic language (apocalyptic) to present God's final victory over all His enemies in order to bolster the people's confidence in God's promises.

To help students realize that the establishment of God's Rule over the world began with the coming of Christ and will be completed at the Parousia, His Second Coming.

B.5 Sub-theme: **Understanding the Bible**

General Objectives

To have students examine the Bible in the non-threatening atmosphere of intellectual inquiry: allowing the doubts, difficulties, questions and problems to surface, be looked at and answered on the level they are being asked.

To provide students with data, information and background on the Bible as a frame of reference for inquiry. Actual research in the Bible will provide support for the inquiry.

To help students come to an understanding of the Bible through reflection on their research, discussion, reporting and questioning.

To help students come to an understanding of what the Catholic Christian Church believes currently about the Bible in discovering why the Church believes as it does.

Course Divisions

1. Introduction

   Objective:

   To acquaint students with the nature and purpose of the course and their source book.

   Suggested Activities:

   1. Allow students to express freely their opinion, viewpoints, objections and attitudes toward the Bible. Take note of the kinds and types of difficulties they have.
   2. Have students peruse the Bible to become acquainted with the books of the Old Testament and New Testament and their content.
   3. Ask students to write a short essay entitled, "What I Think the Bible says to Christians".

2. **What is the Bible?**

   Objective:

   To help students understand the Bible as literature and revelation. This division presents the Bible as a partial record of the religious interpretation of the real history of the Israelites. It discusses how and why Jews and Christians consider the Bible to be a special form of revelation. It discusses the meaning of revelation and the nature of belief as it relates to the Bible.

   Suggested Activities:

   1. Ask students for different definitions of the Bible.
   2. Have students compare the Bible with the God stories of the Greeks and Romans, and with the king and emperor stories of the fourth, fifth and sixth centuries before Christ. (ref. The Great Ages of Man Series: Ancient Egypt. Classical Greece and Imperial Rome: also see "The World's Great Religions.")
   3. Have students do research on the meaning of inspiration and discuss the results with their classmates.
   4. Have students make a "This I can't believe" list of their difficulties with the Bible. Do not try to answer them at this point.
   5. Discuss with students that the Bible is not a scientific or history textbook. Clarify by using examples from newspapers, especially the sports page. Stress the fact of conscious exaggeration.

3. **The Structure of the Bible**

   Objective:

   To understand the effect of language, literary form and function on the Bible's message about God.

   Suggested Activities:

   1. Have students analyze a newspaper or magazine for different forms or styles of writing used in contemporary literature. Also use examples from T.V. and other news media to illustrate the fact that a single incident can be related in many different ways.

2. Discuss with students the effect of languages on composition, the images used, references to common experiences and meaning. To illustrate the point, ask students to rewrite a psalm using modern images while keeping the meaning the same (Psalms 43, 47, or 54).
3. In order to help students understand the difference between pure history and imaginative history have them skim over Genesis 12-50. Discuss how religious history differs from the secular history of people as such.
4. Have students report on what the gospels are trying to picture by having them summarize what Acts 2, 3 and 4 say and what John 1 says.
5. Have students select one of the four gospels and read it through to get a total impression of what the gospels are all about.
6. Discuss with students the meaning of "myths" in sacred scriptures.

4. **How the Bible Came to Be**

Objective:

To understand how the Bible grew out of the religious experiences of the people of Israel.

This division shows the Bible as a way in which God makes Himself known to mankind. It analyses the contents of the Bible from the viewpoint of oral traditions, written material and the editing process. It explains how what was included in the Bible got there and why it did. It explains how God gradually revealed Himself to mankind through the Israelites' religious interpretation of their history. Finally, it discusses the Biblical people as real people who lived at a real time in history, in a real place.

Suggested Activities:

1. In order to help students understand why only certain materials are included in the Bible, have them read John 21:24-25, Psalm 135, Ezra 1, or the Epistle to the Hebrews, chapter 1 and 2:14, to see the intent of the author. Have them report on their research.
2. Have students skim the books of the Pentateuch looking for the use of expressions like "The Lord said," "God spoke," "God called," and the like. Help them realize that the Bible is a uniquely sacred book because of the constant reference to the saving acts of God and the covenant the people of Israel made with God.
3. In order to help students realize the unique role of the Hebrew prophets in the formation of the Jewish people into a religious nation, have them read Isaiah, chapters 6, 1, 2, 3, 9 and 11.
4. Have students do some research, in any encyclopedia, for materials on the Gods and Goddesses of ancient Rome, Greece, Egypt and Babylonia. Students should contrast these ideas with the idea of God the Israelites had (ref: Genesis 12:1-9, 13:1-18 and 17:1-9).
5. Read with the students Psalms 4, 7, 8, 9, 14, 18, 19, 20 and 22 to see how conscious the Jewish people are of the presence of God and their dependence upon Him for their welfare.

6. To make the idea of personal religious experience more meaningful have students read Psalm 139 and discuss or write about its meaning in their own lives.

5. **The Old Testament, God's Revelation in History**

Objective:

To understand the life-vision of the Israelites and how that vision can direct the lives of Christians today.

This division helps to understand the history of Israel. It emphasizes the centrality of the Covenant with God, and explains the covenant and the role that the law, the prophets and the writings play in Israel's history and God's self-revelation. It charts the historical events in the Bible and the interpretation of these events as presented in the Bible. It sketches the person and role of Moses in God's self-revelation. It further presents the unlikelihood of the Israelites (because of circumstances) making a religious breakthrough. It points out that God must have initiated the action of revelation in and through the Bible. Finally it explains how God reveals Himself progressively and what is known about God from His revelation. It presents reasons for reading the Bible with faith.

Suggested Activities:

1. Summarize for students Genesis 42 to 50 and Exodus 1 to 19:8 to find the highlights of the recorded events. This will give them a better understanding of the setting for the Covenant.
2. Have students read Jeremiah 7:21-23, Ezekiel 11:14-21, Hosea 2:21-25 and Psalm 78 to understand better the importance of the Covenant in the minds of the Jewish people.
3. Show students an audio-visual production which gives an account of the development of Covenant from the time of Abraham to the Early Christian Community and discuss implications for daily life.

6. **The New Testament, God's Revelation in Christ**

Objective:

To understand the meaning of Jesus in God's revelation of His purpose in Creation.

This division explains how the New Testament was formed. It explains why Jesus was considered the promised or hoped-for Jewish Messiah and the effect of the resurrection and Pentecost events on the apostles. It explains how the structure of each gospel is determined by the purpose of the gospel account. It explains what Acts is in itself and as revelation, as well as the nature of the book of Revelation. It invites students to read the New Testament with faith.

Suggested Activities:

1. In order to help students accept, with the apostles, the conclusion that Jesus was the Son of God, assign the following research and discuss:
   i) What do Mark 1:21-22 and Matthew 7:28-29 say the people thought about Jesus?
   ii) With the help of 1 Corinthians 15, give a summary of Paul's ideas about the meaning of Jesus' resurrection for mankind.

iii) Research how the first followers of Jesus met Him (John 1:35-51; Matthew 4:18-22; Mark 1:16-20).

iv) Research how Jesus took over the national leadership of the apostles (Matthew 4:23-25; Mark 1:21-45; Luke 4:14-49; John 2:1-25).

2. In order to help students understand the apostles' experience of Jesus' resurrection have them analyze and discuss Matthew 28:1-10; Mark 16:1-18; Luke 24:1-49; and John 20 and 21.

3. In order to help students understand the apostles' experience of Pentecost have them analyze and discuss Luke 24:49; John 14:16-17, 25-26; and Acts 1 and 2.

4. Have students read the Epistle to the Hebrews, chapters 1, 2 and 3, to see how the apostles developed a new understanding of the Messiah.

5. Have students read the "Sermon on the Mountain" in Matthew 6 and 7, to see how the apostles developed a new understanding of the meaning of "Kingdom."

6. Have students write an essay on whether or not Jesus' ideas could work.

7. Have students read Chapter 21 of the Book of Revelation. Then assign an essay entitled: "My Version of What the Kingdom of God Ought to be if all Persons Lived up to the Vision of Jesus."

Theme C: The Contemporary Christian Community

C.1 Sub-theme: **The Church: Pilgrim People of God**

General Objectives

To help students link the story of the Church with their own experience of Church.

To enable students to understand the scriptural foundations of the church and to appreciate our continuing participation in the story of Jesus' Good News in the Catholic Christian tradition.

To lead students forward in a journey towards an acceptance of responsibility to be a full participant in the Church.

To help students appreciate the centrality of worship, the role of the parish and the different approaches to Church.

To lead students through an understanding of the history of the Church.

To raise students awareness of their own attitudes about the Church and how those attitudes might change or grow in the future.

Course Divisions

1. **Our Personal Experience of Church**

   Objectives:

   To help students realize the significance of their own individual lifestories as a frame of reference for understanding the story and the meaning of the Church.

   To lead students to appreciate how their own lifestories intersect with and mirror the larger story of the Christian community's journey so that they will understand and value their participation in it.

   To have students write their own lifestories by identifying significant persons, events and experiences in their past and present lives.

2. **The Ministry of Jesus**

   Objectives:

   To lead students to a greater understanding of Jesus and His ministry as the foundation of the Church.

   To develop in students a **positive awareness** of what it means to be a Christian in the world today.

   To enable students to see and follow Jesus as the model for a Christian way of life.

3. **The Early Christian Community**

   Objectives:

   To give students an understanding of the working of the early Church and its similarity with today's Church.

   To help students appreciate the problems of the early Church as an inevitable part of the true community and to parallel this realization with their own experience.

   To help students analyze a problem-solving process used in the early Church and be able to apply it in their own parish situations.

4. **Models of Church**

Objectives:

To help students understand the concept of Church by the presentation of models.

To enable students to see the many aspects of the Church and to accept its universality.

To make it possible for students to find the model most beneficial to their own understanding of Church and to live it more fully.

5. **The Church: The People of God**

Objectives:

To help students gain a sense of history of God revealing Himself and of a people responding; to see this story as the roots of the Christian community.

To enable students to appreciate the faith struggles of their ancestors and to realize their responsibility in continuing to shape this story of the Church.

To have students construct a time line identifying the significant people, events and experiences in the Church's story in the Bible.

6. **From St. Paul Until Today**

Objectives:

To acquaint students with the history of the Church in order to identify significant people and experiences that have shaped the Church today.

To enable students to come to a realistic understanding of both the human element and the Divine Presence in the Church since its beginning.

To help students identify the cycle of history observable in each era of the Church's history.

7. **The Mission of the Church**

Objectives:

To enable students to identify the elements essential to proclaiming God's Word.

To help students come to a more complete understanding of how their lives can proclaim the message of Jesus.

To have students engage in an evangelization experience with a confused peer by writing a letter.

8. **The Celebrating Community**

Objectives:

To help students understand the meaning of celebration as it applies to their Christian life of worship.

To help students see and accept their personal responsibility to be involved in community celebrations of Mass and the sacraments.

To have students plan a meaningful celebration of the Liturgy for the entire group.

9. **The Church: The Agent of Justice**

   Objectives:

   To have students understand the reason behind the need for social action in the Church today.

   To have students see that some form of social action is an obligation for every Christian in response to the Gospel imperative to "love one another."

   To find ways that the Christian response to social action can be a reality in the students' life.

10. **The Parish Community**

    Objectives:

    To help students identify and understand the various elements of the parish community and how they function.

    To help students to see the reality of the parish today and be able to build toward greater understanding and commitment to the parish in the future.

    To help students to be able to see and accept their own personal responsibility to the parish and the Church.

C.2 Sub-theme: **Christian Worship and Sacraments**

General Objectives

To help students meet their present needs as they search for the relevance of formal, communal worship in their own lives.

To help students see worship as a natural response to the Reality of God and liturgy as a part of that response.

To help students develop a more immediate personal participation in the liturgy.

To provide students with an introduction to the present theology of the liturgy; to help them search out this theology in the rituals of the liturgy and to invite them to discover the meaning of the liturgy in their own lives.

To help students grow in their understanding of worship, in allowing them to study, discuss, reflect on and become involved in the liturgy as it is now.

To help students realize that Christians, through their worship and daily lives, reveal and extend the Risen Christ to all those who want to see and hear.

Course Divisions

1. **Introduction**

   Objective:

   To acquaint students with the nature and purpose of the course.

2. **Changing Relationships**

   Objective:

   To understand the nature of religious growth and holiness as the growing expansion of a person's relationship to God.

This division examines the dynamics of growth as a complex process. It explains the nature of a person's growth-to-maturity, and emphasizes the spiritual self as an integral part of the total self and growth of holiness as a part of a person's total growth-to-maturity.

3. **Keeping in Touch with God**

   Objective:

   To help students understand the Christian experience of God and prayer as a response to God's presence.

   This division gives the student a more informed idea of the Christian notion of God. It examines prayer as a response to Who and What God is for students, rather than a duty imposed by authority.

4. **Christian Prayer: A Personal Response to God's Presence**

   Objective:

   To help students understand prayer as a personal expression of an individual's relationship with God, a personal response of adoration, thanksgiving, sorrow or petition.

   This division examines prayer as a response to the presence of God. It helps students understand personal prayer as natural, spontaneous and thoughtful. It deals specifically with the question of how God answers my prayers.

   Suggested Activities:

   1. Ask students to create collages (picture essays) depicting the Christian as a community person.
   2. Ask students to gather instances of "community spirit" from newspapers and magazines.
   3. Have students find contemporary songs related to community.

5. **Christian Prayer as Group Responses to God's Presence**

   Objective:

   To help students understand how a people's response to God is expressed in their public worship.

   This division introduces the liturgy as the celebration of God's saving actions in Christ. It examines the liturgy as a sign, or visible expression of God's saving action in Christ.

   Suggested Activities:

   1. Have students visit a church and have them recognize signs and symbols. Ask them to name and draw each symbol, and to explain its meaning and practical purpose.
   2. Discuss the symbolic meaning of water and fire. Begin with the human experience of actual fire and water before leading into abstract notions such as destruction, light, love, spirit, cleansing, burial, life, etc.
   3. Have students make a collage of signs and symbols used in modern living in order to illustrate the nature and importance of sacramental signs.

4. Ask students to watch for symbols during the Mass, e.g., raised arms, blessings, kneeling, standing.

6. **God's Saving Presence in the Liturgy**

Objective:

To help students understand what the sacraments really are by discussing the nature and purpose of the sacraments in general and, in particular, Baptism and Confirmation.

Suggested Activities:

1. Ask students to research the signs and symbols used in Baptism and to discuss their significance.
2. Encourage students to attend a parish baptism. If possible plan a baptismal ceremony together with the parish priest.
3. Have students do some research on their patron saint; have them find out where they were baptized and by whom.
4. Have students discuss the meaning of the sacrament of Confirmation to their personal faith life.
5. Discuss: "If we were to draw up a program to implement Jesus' plan of action for sharing his Spirit (Luke 4), how would students go about it in their own local Church."

7. **The Sacrament of the Eucharist: Signs of Covenant — Sign of Unity**

Objective:

To help students understand the significance of the Eucharistic Prayer. It presents the Mass as a total act of worship.

Suggested Activities:

1. Have the students attend a Ukrainian Catholic Rite mass. Have someone from that particular community explain the celebration before the students witness it.
2. If possible, have students attend a Jewish Seder service, as the general format of the Mass comes to us from Jewish liturgical practices.
3. Help students develop various parts of the Mass as research projects. Preparing prayers of various kinds and selecting themes, scripture readings and songs to give them a better feeling for the nature of the Mass.
4. Have students prepare a parents' Mass and invite the parents to participate.

8. **The Healing Sacraments**

Objective:

To understand the sacrament of Reconciliation and the sacrament of the Sick as "healing sacraments"; two ways through which the Church expresses its holiness and overcomes evil.

Suggested Activities:

1. Have students recognize and discuss the signs and symbols employed in the celebration of the sacrament of Reconciliation.

2. Have students research the historical development of the sacrament of Reconciliation, showing the basis for confession as we know it today.
3. Research the Parables of Jesus as stories of forgiveness and repentance.
4. Have students find songs of repentance and reconciliation.
5. Have a celebration of Reconciliation for the class.
6. Have a panel discussion on how students can help overcome evils they know exist in their school (e.g., drugs, alcohol, stealing, cheating).

9. **The Creation Sacraments**

   Objective:

   To help students understand what the Church celebrates in the sacrament of Matrimony and the sacrament of Orders — God's creative gift to people.

10. **The Liturgical Year: Recollection of the Mystery of Christ**

    Objectives:

    To help students understand the signficance of the liturgical calendar and to develop an appreciation for the present reality of salvation.

    Suggested Activity:

    Have students write an essay on how they are "Christ to the world" using their understanding of sacrament, and referring to the ways in which Christians and non-Christians "encounter Christ."

C.3 Sub-theme: **Prayer in Contemporary Spirituality**

General Objectives

To have students develop an awareness of life and understand prayer as a response to life.

To bring the young Christian to discover the need for and relevance of prayer in our personal and corporate lives.

To provide students with basic information about prayer, as well as providing an opportunity for students to experience prayer as an integral part of this contemporary Christian life.

To create students awareness of Jesus' prayer life, as well as the different kinds of approaches to Christian prayer.

Course Divisions

1. **Listening to Life**

   Objective:

   To help students examine how life and prayer are greatly influenced by our notions, ideas, senses, attitudes.

2. **To Pray is to Live**

   Objective:

   To recognize that prayer, which is communication with God, ought to be realized in our daily experiences.

Suggested Activities:

1. Have each participant choose an article or picture from newspapers and magazines that speak to them of living life more fully. Make a group collage. Print an appropriate scripture quotation across the face of the collage.
2. Listen to current songs that offer new insights into life. Ask students to bring records that speak of life.
3. Search the New Testament gospels for references that Jesus made to living life more fully. Read these slowly and meditatively.

3. **To Pray is to Listen**

Objective:

To help students experience prayer as listening to oneself, to others, and to God's word.

Suggested Activities:

1. Listening Experience: Take a few minutes to listen to the stillness with your group. Then listen consecutively to sounds you may hear outside and inside the room. Listen to yourself. Discuss your thoughts and feelings.
2. Take students on an awareness walk. Encourage them to walk in silence so that they can be conscious of everyone and everything around them. Listen to the sounds. When they return, have students write a brief description of something that appealed to their senses of sight and sound.
3. Divide the class into pairs of students. Each student chooses a subject about which he feels strongly and expresses it to his partner. Partners exchange roles, with the listener becoming the speaker. After about 5 minutes, they evaluate each other as listeners.
4. Invite a knowledgeable speaker to discuss yoga, zen, transcendental meditation or any other form of meditation which can be helpful to anyone trying to learn stillness.

4. **Responding to What We've Heard**

Objective:

To bring students to understand that to be a believer is to respond to the call of God in prayer and Christian commitment.

5. **To Pray is to Wait**

Objective:

To help students appreciate the basic Christian and prayerful attitude of openness of receiving, of waiting — waiting to receive God's abundant gifts.

Suggested Activities:

1. In small groups discuss written responses to such incomplete sentences as: I find waiting most difficult when . . .; I don't mind waiting when . . .; When I am kept waiting I usually feel . . .
2. Read the scripture passage about the potter in Jeremiah 18:1-6. Discuss. Using pipe cleaners have each member of the group twist the wire into a sculpture that symbolizes some form of waiting. Share.

3. Use some classroom presentations on this theme as a Communion reflection during Advent or Lent.
4. Have a Jesse Tree celebration (available in several liturgy books) which emphasizes, through symbols, the major events in salvation history for which the chosen people waited.

6. **To Pray is to Say Yes**

Objective:

To realize that prayer is our response — our Yes to One who asks for our commitment as real Christians.

Suggested Activities:

1. Create a banner, poster or mural to express your feelings about the Yes you have said to living a Christian lifestyle.
2. Have each student write a sentence or two telling what his being a Christian means to him. Later, record the statements on tape as an original soundtrack to accompany student-selected slides.
3. Have a paraliturgical service in a darkened room using such materials as a candle, the scripture passage Phillippians 1:9-10.

7. **To Pray is to Share (Communal Prayer)**

Objective:

To explore the meaning of prayer in relationship to Christian community (i.e., discovering how shared prayer leads to and is essential to the celebration of the Eucharist).

Suggested Activities:

1. Invite a person or a panel of speakers to address your group on the subject of prayer groups (e.g., Charismatic Prayer; Faith and Sharing).
2. Have students research the community life of religious groups who live in the community (e.g., religious orders of priests, sisters, or lay communities).
3. As a group, plan the liturgy for a Eucharistic celebration on some particular theme (e.g., unity, friendship). Committees formed to plan the celebration may be (a) readings and prayers, (b) music, (c) multimedia presentation, (d) decorations.

8. **Some Methods of Praying**

Objective:

To help students probe the many different prayer forms available to us as Christians.

Suggested Activities:

1. Ask a priest, minister or sister to explain the forms of prayer that are a part of their daily lives (e.g., format of the Divine Office, praying with scripture). Take time to experience these prayer forms together.
2. Have students do on-the-street interviews with persons whom they know inquiring about the type of prayer used most often and why.

3. Have students look up one of the following Psalms: 3, 6, 8, 11, 18, 21, 31, 41, 63. Direct each student to write next to the psalm the particular human need or situation which is described, next to that, the kind of prayer to God which is expressed in the psalm (e.g., Psalm 25: danger, oppression - prayer of reliance, trust). Use some psalms for prayer.
4. Try "the Mantra" which is a simple form of achieving peace. The participant repeats "om" over and over again feeling the vibrations in his mouth, and head, and whole body. The "Jesus Prayer" (Lord Jesus, have mercy on me) is a kind of Christian mantra that can become a meaningful stepping stone to contemplation.

C.4 Sub-theme: **Everyday Ecumenism**

General Objectives

To give students an insight into the beliefs and practices of other Christian religions with a view to achieving greater tolerance and mutual understanding in an age of religious diversity.

To provide students with practical guidelines for a Christian who wishes to engage in religious activities with those who hold differing beliefs.

To help students recognize whatever is truly Christian in order to bring a more perfect realization of the mystery of Christ and the Church.

Course Divisions

1. **Christianity**

   Objective:

   To help students gain an overview of Christianity, its origin and its writings and its principal teachings about God, the world, mankind and our destiny and Christian religious observances.

2. **Principles of Ecumenism**

   Objectives:

   To help students understand the meaning of ecumenism, the nature of the ecumenical movement and the basic principles for ecumenical dialogue.

   To familiarize students with the principles of ecumenism enunciated in the Vatican II Decree on Ecumenism.

3. **Catholicism**

   Objective:

   To help students understand the main teachings of the Catholic Church. To clarify the Catholic position within the Christian Church.

4. **The Orthodox Church**

   Objective:

   To help students appreciate the unique position of the Orthodox Church within the Christian Church and its relationship with the Catholic Church.

5. **Protestantism**

Objectives:

To help students gain an overview of the history and the extensive influence of the Protestant Reformation.

To help students appreciate the Protestant tradition and to realize how it bears witness to truth which needs emphasis.

6. **Lutheranism**

Objective:

To help students appreciate the long-range effects of the service and disservice that Luther contributed to the Christian Church.

7. **Presbyterians**

Objectives:

To help students appreciate the efforts of the reformed tradition to emphasize the sovereignty and majesty of God.

To help students explore avenues of questioning in an attempt to understand Presbyterian codes of conduct.

To help students explore avenues of questioning in an attempt to understand Presbyterian codes of conduct.

8. **Anglicans and Methodists**

Objectives:

To help students understand why the Methodists formally separated from Anglicans and how both churches have maintained a vibrant missionary spirit with an ecumenical tradition.

To help students appreciate the meditating qualities of the Anglican and Methodist practices and beliefs as a bridge between Catholicism and Protestantism.

9. **The United Church**

Objective:

To help students appreciate the stress on looking forward and being sensitive to change.

10. **Baptists, Congregationalists and Quakers**

Objectives:

To arouse in students a respect for man's search for a personal relationship with God, as exemplified by the beliefs of the Quakers and Baptists.

To help students appreciate the Baptists' stress on Scripture, the Congregationalists' emphasis on Christ's presence and the Quakers' experiment in lay Christianity.

11. **Mormons, Jehovah's Witness and Christian Scientists**

Objectives:

To help students appreciate the merits of religious tolerance by acquainting them with the strict adherence to rigid standards which the above denominations set for themselves.

To help students realize that membership, participation and zealous missionary work are notable characteristics of these three churches.

12. **Pentecostals, the "Jesus" People**

Objectives:

To help students appreciate the courage with which these groups display their unswerving faith in Christ.

To help students understand the lifestyles and beliefs of these groups.

Theme D: The Christian: A Person For Others

D.1 Sub-theme: **Christian Morality and Conscience**

General Objectives

To help students understand that the need to be a good moral person arises, not from an outside agent forcing them into behavior patterns that are foreign to themselves, but from within their nature as human persons.

To help students understand that morality is concerned with the way a person lives.

To help students understand that Christian morality is a guide to help them achieve their true potential.

To invite students to accept the Christian moral view as that which most nearly fulfills their own innate sense of what it means to be truly human.

Course Divisions

1. **How Moral Are You?**

   Objective:

   To help students clarify where they are morally.

   This division attempts, through a series of questions, to help the students clarify their present moral principles and behavior.

2. **What is Morality?**

   Objective:

   To help students understand true morality as a response to what it means to be human.

   This division establishes the concept of morality and humanity. Morality is defined as the human thing to do. Once these two concepts have been established then the discussion is brought to focus on Christian morality and the role of the Church as a guide in morality.

3. **Why People Choose to Act as They Do**

   Objective:

   To help students understand why people choose to act as they do so as to begin the process of making wise choices based on reason.

   This division deals with the forces that influence human behavior. Conscience is introduced as an influence on behavior.

4. **The Reality of Sin**

   Objective:

   To help students understand what sin really is: a freely chosen action which is not the truly human thing to do, affecting the sinner personally, disrupting one's relationship with others and contributing to the totality of evil in the world.

   This division deals with the problem of evil; evil in itself; the causes and effects of sin; evil in relation to good.

5. **The Importance of Law**

   Objective:

   To further develop students' ideas of and respect for the law as a guide for helping people become the kind of persons they are capable of becoming.

   This division should establish the purpose and kinds of law; the connection between law and morality; the relationship between the Ten Commandments and Jesus' command to love.

6. **The "Jesus Principle" in Morality**

   Objective:

   To help students develop an awareness of the meaning and purpose of Jesus' command to love one's neighbor.

   Through the study of scriptural passages, the student is brought to an awareness of Jesus' command to love one's neighbor and is called to live as Christ has shown us.

D.2 Sub-theme: **Moral Problems of Today**

General Objectives

To have students view their lives as responsible Christians in today's world.

To help students comprehend the application of the law of God and the teachings of the Church relative to moral problems in today's world.

To help students learn the law of God, the teachings of Christ and the teachings of the Church relative to moral problems in today's world.

To assist students to develop a responsible attitude in the midst of moral problems in today's world.

To enable students to appreciate that fidelity to Jesus is the Christian's guiding light in a pluralistic society.

Course Divisions

1. **Sources of Morality**

   Objectives:

   To help students understand the nature of a morally pluralistic society.

   To help students appreciate the fact that moral values are fully internalized only when believed in.

   To help students understand society as a place of both goodness and evil.

   To help students understand the role of the Christian in our comtemporary culture as one called to be a witness in the midst of attitudes and ideas that are not always open to God.

   Suggested Activity:

   Rewrite the **Beatitudes** in teenage language.

2. **Sexual Morality**

Objectives:

To help students understand sexuality within the broadest possible context of human life.

To help students comprehend sexual acts in the context of committed human love.

To help students understand the cultural, historical influences.

To help students appreciate the social influences affecting contemporary attitudes concerning sexuality.

To help students understand and appreciate the dignity of sexuality in the light of revelation; the gospel and the teachings of the Church.

3. **Respect for Life**

Objectives:

To assist students to distinguish between respect based on social or personal qualities and respect based on love.

To help students see that Christian morality is founded on the love that the religious person is aware of as he sees human life to be a sacred gift from God.

To help students understand the respect a Christian has for life because of Creation as shown in Genesis and in the Incarnation event.

That students be sensitive to threats to human dignity found in our contemporary society, e.g. abortion, bodily integrity, rights of the sick.

Suggested Activity:

Have students prepare a slide presentation on the beauty of life (substitute collage, posters or such as medium).

4. **Drugs (this includes alcohol)**

Objectives:

To help students understand the dignity of the human being and the necessity to retain this dignity especially the use of its free will and intelligence.

To help students develop an awareness of the influences in our society that are conducive to an excessive use of drugs.

To help students realize the importance of self-discipline to counteract the enticing and alluring propaganda in our contemporary society regarding the use and abuse of drugs.

To help students understand the devastating effects of the abuse of drugs on their physical, mental, intellectual and psychological health.

To ensure students develop Christian values with respect to drugs.

Suggested Activities:

1. Have students research the causes of the drug culture in which we live, the nature of the problem and the plausible course of action.
2. Invite drug squad police officers to share their views and experiences on the topic.

3. Have students research the help available for persons who have problems, e.g., Alcoholics Anonymous, detoxification centres.

4 Invite a worker from a Rehabilitation Centre such as the Calder Centre in Saskatoon.

5. **Other Moral Problems**

The first divisions of this theme tend to be individualistic or personalistic in thrust. The purpose of this division is to look at the responsibility of the Christian as a member of a local and/or national community. It is hoped that the teacher will be able to employ a case study approach to a number of moral problems suggested.

A. The Christian in Politics

Objective:

To help students focus on the Christian responsibility of concern for others and to translate this concern into appropriate action.

Suggested Activities:

1. Have students research the meaning of "politics."
2. Research case studies which explore the responsibility of a Christian in:
   - the family
   - school
   - parish
   - youth groups
   - community.
3. Election time activity
   a) Invite a speaker or have a panel discussion on the responsibility of Christians at election time.
   b) Have students communicate with the candidates to become aware of the issues. Invite candidates to the school.
   c) Encourage student participation in school elections as a candidate and an elector.
   d) Radical political action: studies of Christians who have shown ultimate concern such as Martin Luther King, Caesar, Chavez, Jean Vanier, Mother Teresa.

B. The Christian in the Business World

Objective:

To help students explore the notion of Christian justice from the perspective of both producer and consumer.

Suggested Activities:

Prepare case studies which explore:

1. Responsibility of the employer/producer to the community
   i) giving value for money,
   ii) exacting a just profit,
   iii) warranty and grievance procedure,
   iv) community service of various kinds.

2. Responsibility of the employer/producer to his producers

   i) paying a just wage,
   ii) tenure and security of employment,
   iii) discrimination on the basis of:

   — marital status
   — sex
   — physical capabilities
   — race

   Christian business people can be good resource speakers for such topics.

3. Responsibility of the consumer to the employer/producer

   i) permitting the producer a fair profit (copyright laws),
   ii) shoplifting: Its effects on the producer; its effects on prices to other consumers,
   iii) other forms of cheating — warranty or returning goods.

4. Responsibility of employee to employer

   i) reasonable collective bargaining demand,
   ii) doing a day's work for a day's pay,
   iii) damage to property, carelessness with equipment, theft of goods, etc.

D.3 Sub-theme: **Marriage**

General Objectives

To help students increase their understanding of the nature and importance of Christian love - both for the world in general and for their own lives in particular.

To assist students to better understand the nature of love as a growth process, the three primary facets of Jesus' commandment to love and the difference between genuine love and infatuation.

To help students arrive at a better understanding of the meaning and implications of each of the following in light of Christian values and future marital happiness: the dating process, the nature and importance of compatibility, the idea of "living together" before marriage and the engagement period preceding marriage.

To assist students in better understanding the nature and meaning of the Sacrament of Marriage, of the Church's teachings and practices regarding marriage and getting married, the meaning of the wedding liturgy, and the difference between preparations and expectations regarding marriage which are both realistic and life-giving, and those which are not.

To offer students a better understanding of the nature and characteristics of the type of intimacy in marriage which is truly patterned on the intimacy which God has with each of us and which exists between Christ and the Church, and of practical ways of overcoming the various barriers to this type of intimacy which can arise.

To help students achieve a greater appreciation for the importance of good communication in relationships, love and marriage and of ways in which such communication can be improved.

To help students achieve a greater understanding of the nature and importance of sexual expression and the sexual intimacy in marriage in light of Christian values and the Church's teachings.

To help increase students' understanding of the nature and possibilities for meaning and fulfillment for the single Christian.

To give students an increased understanding and awareness, in light of Church teachings, of the meaning and sacredness of the family lifestyle, the practical responsibilities associated with having a family, ways of helping to nurture both children and family life and possible ways of coping more positively with the concerns which can pose special problems and threats to the integrity of the family.

To give students a more comprehensive and realistic understanding and awareness, within a Christian frame of reference, of the various practical areas of responsibility regarding family life and the lifestyle values and standards.

To assist students in further understanding, in a more practical and personal way, the meaning and relevance of the gospel mysteries of death-resurrection as these are experienced by individuals experiencing the loss of a relationship with a loved one.

Course Divisions

1. **A Look at Marriage Today**

   Objective:

   To bring students to an awareness of the falling "success rates" in marriage and to recognize changing motives and ideals in marriage. Success requires continued effort.

   Suggested Activity:

   Students might research current materials to find articles and statistics relating to marriage success rates. Relevant 'local' statistics could be obtained from Department of Health, Vital Statistics Division.

2. **Marriage as a Vocation and Sacrament**

   Objective:

   To help students establish the necessity for a definite decision to marry and to recognize the value of sacramental marriage.

   Suggested Activities:

   1. Structure discussions which would elaborate the usual **Motives** for marriage.
   2. Discuss fully the more common pressures, questions and problems regarding dating and ways of dealing with them which respect the dignity and integrity of both persons involved.
   3. Discuss the reasons why the Church and others have found that 'living together' before marriage tends to be unwise and harmful.

3. **Human Development**

   Objective:

   To awaken in students an awareness of the human growth process as one which requires our personal, conscious and active participation if we are to approach maturity or attain personal fulfillment.

Suggested Activities:

1. Teacher presentation of human behavior patterns as found in psychological studies. Specifically:
   - intellectual
   - physical
   - psychological — development
   - moral
   - socio-sexual

   Reference: Any developmental psychology text.
2. Students might discuss the awareness of their own development in these areas over the last 5-6 years, with an obvious emphasis on dating (socio-sexual development).

4. **Myth and Fact in Marriage**

Objective:

To help students deepen the concept of marriage by examining some common myths and recognizing that it is more than a "legal" contract.

Suggested Activities:

1. Examine some current contrasting values relating to marriage — discussion by students would probably reflect these contrasts.

   E.g., a) marriage should be lasting — marriage should be temporary.

   b) sexuality (person) is most important — sex is most important.

   c) freedom is found in expressed responsibility — freedom is lost if one is "bound" to another.
2. Examine the rational basis for society's laws regulating marriage to understand society has an interest in successful marriages. Likewise the church.
   cf. The Marriage Act (Province of Saskatchewan)

5. **Approaches to Love**

Objective:

To help students clarify and attempt to define what is meant by the term love, with a view to using it in proper context. To see that love is a "person-person" relationship and not a "person-thing" relationship.

Suggested Activities:

1. Structure a discussion which works toward a commonly accepted definition of love.
2. Contrast proper and improper uses of the term love.
3. Research current media and material to discover how society "sees" love.

6. **Sexuality**

Objective:

To help students recognize sexuality in a "totality of person" context rather than in the context of the "thing-sex" or sex as a mechanical function. Also, to awaken awareness of the complementary character of male-female.

Suggested Activities:

1. Contrast current media and literature which speaks to sexuality, with the traditional male-female differences reflected in literature and by individuals.
2. Develop the notion that the function of sex without the context of meaningful relationship of persons is meaningless.
3. Discuss values and ideals relating to pre-marital sexual intercourse. Are these values a result of rationality and self-dicipline or impulse?

7. **Practical Aspects**

Objective:

To help students present some of the "mundane realities" involved in the marriage relationship.

E.g., Finance
Natural family planning — Serena Movement
Future — planning the marriage
— establishing a home
— in-laws

Suggested Activities:

1. Consider the meaning of money "for you," and "in the context of marriage."
2. Have students develop a typical family budget from given income or, determine "typical" expenditures from addition of hypothesized needs.
3. Discuss natural family planning.
4. Discuss planning required before marriage — civil and church requirements, etc.

D.4 Sub-theme: **Social Justice**

General Objectives

To show students that social justice is a movement at the heart of the Gospel, and central to everyone's quest for personal salvation and not a peripheral, optional aspect of faith.

To equip students with an analytic ability to understand those areas of human experience which are not normally thought of as "religious"--man's political, social and economic life--in the light of the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

To promote in students a growing awareness of the dignity and fundamental rights of every human person.

To make students more aware of the inequalities in the distribution of material goods, services and power in the world.

To acquaint students with the social teachings of the Church.

To effect in students an attitude which fosters in them the concern and compassion Jesus had for the poor and oppressed.

Course Divisions

1. **People in Need?**

   Objectives:

   To develop students' knowledge and understanding of the problems of hunger and poverty in the world and to introduce possible ways of responding to this need.

   To encourage in students an acceptance of people in need and desire to work for ways to solve social problems.

   To encourage students to respond to those in need by helping to create an atmosphere of Christian concern and action.

2. **Ways of Responding**

   Objectives:

   To help students become more aware of their self-identity through a better understanding of various philosophies of life and the values they embody.

   To help students appreciate the need to develop a philosophy of life that is based on a set of goals and values.

   To assist students to make decisions based on the values and goals that they have consciously chosen.

3. **Yahweh: A God of Justice**

   Objectives:

   To help students grow in their understanding of God as a just God who keeps promises to the people and is with them in their time of need.

   To enable students to value the importance of modeling their relationships on the justice and faithfulness of God, especially in the keeping of promises.

   To assist students in developing interpersonal relations that are based on fidelity and justice.

4. **Jesus and God's Justice**

   Objectives:

   To help students see the life of Jesus as a sign of God's justice in the world and a model for their own call to build up the justice of God's Kingdom.

   To help students identify more fully with the attitude of Jesus toward the poor and the outcasts of society and to develop a willingness to challenge the unjust institutions and structures of our society.

   To assist students in bringing the teachings and example of Jesus to bear on specific issues of justice in their lives.

5. **A World Divided by Poverty**

   Objectives:

   To help students become aware of the extent of poverty in cur world, and the extreme division between the "haves" and "have-nots."

   To foster in students a real respect for the poor and a desire to do all they can to help poor people to help themselves.

To challenge students about their own style of life: to direct their interests, values and activities away from materialism and consumerism and more toward the positive work with the poor.

6. **Violence or Peace**

Objectives:

To assist students in developing clear concepts of peace and violence and to understand the Christian response in conflict situations.

To encourage students to develop a Christian attitude toward conflict resolution.

To help students begin to resolve conflicts in their lives in non-violent, non-threatening ways.

7. **Equality**

Objectives:

To help students understand the basis of the various forms of discrimination that exist in our country.

To encourage students to develop a real concern for those suffering from discrimination and inequality and a desire to change the attitudes and structures that foster such conditions.

To assist students to make decisions in their own lives that are based on justice and charity and to challenge attitudes and structures that support discrimination and inequality.

8. **The Value of Every Human Life**

Objectives:

To help students understand that every human life has value and that each person has the same basic human rights.

To enable students to grow in an appreciation of the value of human life and in a willingness to help in safeguarding the gift of life for all people.

To encourage students to assist those whose basic rights are being threatened or denied.

9. **Stewardship: Caring for the Earth**

Objectives:

To help students understand the nature and the extent of the damage to and exploitation of the resources of our earth.

To help students appreciate the need for conservation and intelligent utilization of the resources of the earth.

To assist students to develop a lifestyle that respects and conserves the goods of the earth and challenges the institutions of society to do the same.

10. **Making a Difference**

Objectives:

To bring students to an understanding of how to research an issue in order to make reasoned judgments.

To help students appreciate the fact that law is not just a legal code but a way of living according to gospel principles.

To give positive assistance to students in ways of living according to the principles of servanthood, stewardship and sacrificial love.